

Convivium Cæleste.

A plain and familiar

DISCOURSE

Concerning the

LORDS SUPPER.

SHEWING

At once the nature of that Sacrament, as also the right way of preparing our selves for the receiving of it.

In which are also considered those Exceptions which men usually bring to excuse their not partaking of it.

By *R. Kidder.*

Pfal. 26. 6.

*I will wash my hands in innocency; so
will I compass thine Altar, O Lord.*

L O N D O N,

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*To my Ever Honour'd and very Good Lady, the
Lady Chrillian Dawes of Putney.*

MADAM,

THere are many Books already extant upon the Argument which the following Discourse treats of: And those also so very good in themselves, and so very happy in their Authors, that I cannot think that this which follows, will ever deserve a name amongst them. For as it was at first drawn up for those whose needs required all plainness of speech; so it now adventures abroad in the very same dress in which it was at first compos'd and delivered. And therefore I might well find great reason to dispute with my self whether or not I should adventure this Discourse abroad.

But whatever demur these things might make, yet sure I am, I did not doubt to whom I ought to address it, when I was once resolv'd to make it publick. 'Tis due to you, Madam, whatever it is, upon more scores than one. And though it be unworthy of so good a name, as it will now bear; yet I am certain that it needs it.

I shall not need to recommend to your Ladyship the subject of this following Tract. You are already greatly in love with that part of your duty which is here discours'd of. You are firmly resolv'd to lead a life of Religion, and to give up your self to the obedience of the Laws of your Lord and Saviour. Now certainly you will find nothing a greater help

The Epistle Dedicatory.

to you than frequent and devout Communi-
ons are. You will find great need in your
pilgrimage towards Heaven of such Spiritual
repasts and viands. Nothing can be more wel-
come to a pious Soul than to meet with these
happy opportunities of becoming better. And
they that love their Lord must needs be very
forward to celebrate the memory of his death,
and unspeakable kindness to them. The doing
of this as we ought, will redound greatly to
our advantage. We shall by this means be re-
conciled to God, and in perfect charity to one
another: We shall be more fit to live, and
more prepared to die: We shall the better
support under our sorrows, and be the more
strong against our temptations; our burden
will be the lighter, and yet our strength the
greater: We shall here receive new strength
and vigor to walk in Gods ways: We shall
think that easie which once we thought into-
lerable: We shall lead at once an innocent
and an useful life. The advantages of frequent
and devout Communiions are not to be ex-
pressed. Here are joys which no man can rob
us of; Treasures more valuable than that of
the *Indies*. Every pious Soul will witness to
this truth. And therefore, Madam, I doubt not
but you will the more favourably receive this
Treatise for the arguments sake which it dis-
courseth of.

But still, Madam, I have farther reason upon
my own account to make my acknowledg-
ments

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ments to your Ladiship. Your kindnesse to me have been very great, and have laid a great obligation upon me to shew my thankfulness to you. And as an unfained testimony of my gratitude I am bold to present you with this Discourse. It is indeed but a small tribute of thanks, which here I pay you; but yet is such as I have, and your Ladiship will I hope, rather regard my mind than the thing it self. However I shall be extreemly glad if any thing that is here offered may be of any use to your Ladiship in advancing your eternal interest and concern.

You have made a good beginning, and a wise choice in devoting your self to a Religious life. Continue, Madam, in this purpose. This will turn to your account when all other things will fail you. There was never greater need of regular and exemplary piety than now. Religion is now become the scoff and derision of profane and foolish men. It is not now the mode to be severely pious. Pure Religion and undefiled is very rarely to be found. It is infinitely sad to think that so excellent a Religion as ours is, should be almost every where, either misunderstood, or spoken against. Your constancy now will be more rewardable than at other times. You will now see cause to shew a great regard to the Laws of your dearest Lord when they are so commonly trampled upon. Count it your honour to be truly good. And dare to own your Saviour before

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fore men, and he will confess you before his Heavenly Father.

We are concerned to refute the Atheists, and to defend the excellent Religion which our Lord hath left us against gain-sayers. But there is not a more effectual way of doing this than by an exemplary and pious life. This does more than our most subtile and nervous reasoning, a great example of piety does more good than a learned Pen. This is the most likely way to prevail against those that oppose themselves. Our enemies mouths are stop'd if we take this course: These Arguments are unanswerable, and will convert more to the Faith than our Reasons are like to do. Now, Madam, you can thus defend your Religion against contentious men. This is the way to restore us to what we should be.

I have great reason to believe that your Ladiship will be a great example of real piety. That you will strongly pursue every vertuous and good thing. But yet, Madam, you will pardon me that I put you in mind to persevere and to abound in every good thing. This proceeds not from any distrust, but from a great and sincere desire of your happiness. That the Almighty would keep your Ladiship from every evil thing, and bless you with all the blessings of this and a better life is the most hearty prayer of,

Madam,
*Your Ladiships most
humble Servant,*
Kidder.

The PREFACE.

HOW plain a precept we have to partake of our Lords Supper ; and how much it would be for our advantage to do it ; I shall not need to represent to the Reader in this place. That is done in the following Discourse. And all that I shall here trouble the Reader with, is ;

First, that he would be pleased to understand that this Discourse was by the Author designed for the use of those men who stand in need of the most plain and easie directions : And therefore it is accordingly fitted for such men who have not either the leisure or the other advantages of perusing the more large and elaborate Discourses upon this Subject.

Secondly, that the Authors lot is fallen among those who do very rarely partake of this Sacrament, and that therefore he does the more insist upon the necessity of the duty, as well as upon little Objections which are brought against it, which are so small that they might otherwise have been prudently omitted. But so it is now that we are put upon the proof of those things which our forefathers did not deny. And we have now a double task upon us : To prove the truth of our Religion first, and then to perswade to the practice of it. It might otherwise seem a strange thing that any man should be operose in proving that it is our duty to partake of this Sacrament when the command for it is so plain,

I have

The PREFACE.

I have this moreover to desire of the Reader, that he would (when he reads this Discourse) be careful to lay aside all prejudice. It will be no hard matter to find the truth, in the case here discoursed of, if we seek it sincerely. The good God open our eyes and lead us at once into the paths of truth and peace; And grant that we may be reconciled to him, and to one another.

I have nothing farther to beg of the pious and Christian Reader, but this one request, that he would pray to God for the Author that his labours may not always be in vain.

A plain



A plain and familiar

DISCOURSE

Concerning the LORDS SUPPER;

SHEWING

At once the nature of that Sacrament,
as also the right way of preparing
our selves for the receiving of it.

CHAP. I.

*The Nature and true notion of this Sa-
crament.*

IT is my intention in this following Dis-
course, not to trouble my Reader with
questions and controversies about the
Sacrament of our Lords Supper (of
which there are too many in the world already) but to direct him how he may partake
worthily, as well as shew him the danger in
not partaking at all. And for the better gain-

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ing of the first of these ends, I think it necessary to premise something of the nature, and true notion of this Sacrament of the Lords Supper: That so we may perform a *reasonable service*, and not give *the sacrifice of fools*, who consider not that they do evil, Eccles. 5. 1. And that we may not eat and drink *damnation to our selves*, not discerning the Lords body, 1 Cor. 11. 29.

Now for the better understanding the nature of this Sacrament, it will be necessary the great ends and purposes for which it was ordained by our blessed Saviour, should be duly considered.

Now the ends of this Sacrament of the Lords Supper are these that follow.

I. The renewal of that Covenant which we entered into in our Baptism. The Vow which we made in our Baptism we ought verily seriously to reflect upon. By our Baptism we were received into the Family and Church of Christ; and by the Vow which we then made we are obliged to obey all the commands of Christ. What the Apostle says of Circumcision, I may truly say of Baptism, *I testifie to every man, says he, that is circumcised, that he is a debter to the whole Law*, Gal. 5. 3. And by the same reason every man that is baptized is

χρηστὴν γέγονός
ταῖς ἐντολαῖς τοῦ κυρίου
ἡμῶν. Theo-
phyl. in loc.

obliged to obey all the precepts of the Gospel. The same Apostle tells us, *That they that have been baptized into Christ*

have

have put on Christ, Gal. 3. 27. That is surely, they are obliged to be as he was; to be that by grace which he was by nature; to bear his image into whose name they are baptized. In Baptism we gave up our names to Christ, and by that Sacrament listed our selves under him as the only Captain of our Salvation; we acknowledged him in all his Offices, not only as our Priest, but as our only Prophet, and our King: And did not only profess a belief of the Christian Faith, but solemnly promise obedience to the commands of God in opposition to the Devil, the World and Flesh: This we did when we were baptized, we made a most solemn vow to become the Servants of Christ, and did receive a Sacrament upon it; As amongst the Romans the Soldiers that were listed took an Oath which was called a Sacrament of fidelity, after which they could not revolt without a great shame, and making themselves liable to the severest penalty: So have we done, we have taken this Sacrament of fidelity, and by that have most solemnly obliged our selves to be the faithful Servants and Soldiers of Christ unto our lives end. So that I may well tell the man that is baptized, that he is fast bound and obliged to become a good man by his own promise, and Sacrament of fidelity. But then because our infirmities are ma-

*Budeus in
Pandect.*

*Quod maximum
vinculum est ad
bonam mentem,
promissum virum
bonum. Sacra-
mentum rogatus es.
Senec. Ep. 37.*

ny, and we are apt to forget our promise to God; and because Gods mercies are great, and he is not willing we should perish, he hath ordained an other Sacrament that we might not want a blessed opportunity to *bewail our back-slidings*, and to *renew our Covenant*.

Gods mercy is so great that he does not only bring us into his Family by Baptism, but feed and preserve us there by this Sacrament of our Lords Supper. He would have us saved, and therefore hath ordained this Sacrament, that we might be put upon a most serious repentance for our past sins, and effectual purposes of a new life for the time to come. God would have us fasten the first bond with a more firm and sure knot. Our Souls are like Clocks or Watches, which though they be set right, and wound up, yet stand in need quickly of being set right and wound up again. This is that gracious opportunity that God hath given us of setting all things right, and amending the great disorders of our Souls. We are now to renew that Covenant which we made in Baptism; which because we have failed in, God hath ordained this Sacrament to restore us and set us right: We are now to *lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees: And make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but that it may rather be healed*. Now that this Sacrament was ordained for this end that we might renew our Covenant
which

which we made with God in Baptism will appear if we consider the following Severals,

(1) The very eating and drinking at Gods Table is a federal rite; they that eat together are supposed to be friends. It was a token of friendship of old as the Scriptures will teach us; *Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread hath lift up his heel against me*, Psal. 41. 9. And thus *the men of thy peace, and of thy bread*, are the same with *confederates*, Obad. v. 7. vid. vers. Syriac. in locum. When the Relatives of Job, who had kept from him during his affliction, came to renew their friendship; and express their kindness to him; the Text says, *They did eat bread with him in his house*, Job 42. 11. And certainly it was a sign of great kindness, among the Children of Job, that his Sons feasted in their houses, and called for their Sisters to eat and drink with them, Job 1. 4.

It is a known precept of Pythagoras, That we should not *ἀστρον κατὰ γυναικιν*, that we should not break off our friendship, which by eating Bread together we made a shew of. For that is supposed to be his meaning when he requires that we should not break or divide the Bread of Friends, that we should not *διασπῆναι τὸν σურὸν τῆς ἀφιλίας*. That we should not separate and divide that bond of kindness which holds friends together. But eating Bread together was not only always esteemed

Diogen. Laert.
in vit. Pythag. &
Greg. Gyrald. in
Pythag. Symbol.

a token of kindness and friendship, and confederacy, but it was also anciently a rite that was used when men made or renewed a Covenant with one another. This will also appear from the holy Scriptures, when the *Gibeonites* came to make a League with *Israel*, they brought *Bread* with them as well as *bottles of Wine*: The Bread they brought seemed to be designed for their Covenant which they intended to make with the men of *Israel*, of whom it is said that when they consented to their demands, that *they took of their victuals and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord*, Josh. 9. 14. That is, they made a Covenant with them, and did not first ask counsel of God; for certainly those words *they took of their victuals*, can have no other sense in this place. And so the *Chalde*

קבילו לפתנמי הון *dee* Paraphast seems to understand them, for he renders them thus, *They hearkened unto their words*:

i.e. They consented to enter into Covenant with the *Gibeonites*, and in token of that, they took of their *Victuals*, which was a sign of

their friendship to them. So that the *Gibeonites* might be confident now that they were received into favour, because the *Israelites* had taken of their *Victuals*, and had by that ceremony declared themselves willing to make a League with them: And it follows immediately upon this that *Joshua made peace with them, and made a league*

league with them, &c. v. 13. So that it seems to be very plain that those words, *they took of their victuals*, do import no less than that the *Israelites* yielded to the request of the Men of *Gibeon*, and intended to take them into favour: And the *Gibeonites* might as well conclude so much from their so doing; as the Wife of *Manoah* did infer Gods favour to be towards her and her Husband, because he had received their burnt-offering, and their meat-offering; *If (says she) the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering, and a meat-offering at our hands.* Judg. 13. 23.

Again, when *Isaac* makes a Covenant with *Abimelech*, the Text tells us that he *made a feast and they did eat and drink*: And then it is presently added, *that they swore one to another*, Gen. 26. 30, 31. And when *Jacob* makes a Covenant with *Laban*, it is expressly said, that he *called his brethren to eat bread*, Gen. 31. 54. Eating of bread together was so sure a sign of accord and a mutual kindness that when *Ishmael*, with the men that were with him, came to *Mizpah* with an intention to kill *Gedaliab*, that they might not be suspected of any such design, *they did eat bread with him in Mizpah*, Jer. 41. 2.

And as eating together was a federal rite, and a token of kindness and friendship, so not vouchsafing to eat together hath been also taken for an argument of estrangedness, and a great difference. Thus we read that *the*

Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination to the Egyptians, Gen. 43. 32. And the Apostle when he would have the sincere Christian not so much as to countenance the debaucht and lewd professor of Religion, he will not permit him so much as to eat with him, 1 Cor. 5. 11.

By what hath been said it does appear that eating and drinking together hath been a mark of kindness, and hath been used when Covenants and Agreements have been made between men. Now when we partake of the Lords Supper we have fellowship with God himself, 1 Cor. 10. 20, 21. We eat at his Table, and do become his guests. But because we can have no fellowship with him when we walk in darkness, (1 Joh. 1. 6.) therefore we cannot partake aright of this Supper of our Lord unless we put away the evil of our doings, unless we put on the Wedding-garment, and renew that Covenant which we did once make with God, and which we have so greatly broken.

(2) That this Sacrament was ordained for a renewal of our Covenant with God appears from the words of our Saviour when he did first institute and appoint it. When he gave his Disciples the Cup he adds, *This is my blood of the new Testament* (or Covenant as that word signifies) *which is shed for many, for the remission of sins*, Mat. 26. 28. For the better understanding of which words we may

may remember that it was an ancient custom in the World when Men entered into Covenant with one another that they did it by shedding of Blood; they did slay a beast and pour out its blood, and thus they did *ferre fedus*, strike a Covenant with one another. In token I suppose, that he that should fail of performing his part of the Covenant which they entered into should perish as the beast did which was slain before them. Nor was this a custom among the Gentiles only but also a custom that God made use of among the *Jews* his own people. For so we read, that when God gave his Law to that people, and that Law had been read in the audience of the people, and the people had promised obedience to that Law, that they entered into Covenant by blood: For it is added, that *Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, behold the blood of the Covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words, Exod. 24. 8.* This was the blood of that Covenant which God made with that people. To these words our Saviour may be thought to allude, when he was ready to lay down his life and shed his blood for our redemption, he gives his Disciples the Cup, and tells them, *This is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* That blood which *Moses* sprinkled was the blood of *beasts*, but this is the blood of *Jesus*; that was the blood of a Covenant, but of

of the *old*, but this is the blood of the *New*, and *Better Covenant*: That was shed for the *Jews* only, but this is shed for *many*, for *Jew* and *Gentile*, for all that believe. The blood of the Law of *Moses* did not expiate for *all* sins, but this blood is shed for the *remission* of sins, aye of those sins which could not be remitted by the Laws of *Moses*. For by *Jesus* we have the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of *Moses*, *Act. 13. 39.*

So that as the blood which *Moses* sprinkled, was the blood of that Covenant which the *Jews* entered into, so is the blood of *Jesus* which he shed for us the blood of the *New Covenant*; and he that drinks of this blood renews his Covenant, and doth most solemnly take upon himself the observation of the Laws of *Christ*. When *Moses* had read the Law to the people, and they had promised obedience, then does he sprinkle them with the blood of the Covenant, and by that federal rite they are received into Covenant with God. And so when our blessed Saviour had taught his Disciples the will of his Heavenly Father, and was ready to shed his blood for our remission, he ordains this Sacrament of his blood, which when we do partake of as we should, lays a strict obligation upon us to obedience of the Laws of God which are made known to us in the Gospel. When we drink of this Cup we
renew

renew our Covenant with God, and do most solemnly bind our selves to a faithful and sincere obedience; we do as it were take a Sacramental Oath of allegiance; and if we be treacherous and false we are perjured persons, and make our selves guilty of the blood of Jesus.

II. Another end of this Sacrament is that we should remember the love of our Lord Jesus Christ in laying down his life for us. *This do in remembrance of me*, Luk. 22. 19. *As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lords death till he come*, 1 Cor. 11. 26. The Jewish Passover was appointed for a memorial of their deliverance out of Egypt, Exod. 12. 14. And this Christian Passover was instituted for a memorial, but of a greater deliverance than from the bondage of Egypt, of our redemption from sin and death. So great a mercy as the deliverance out of Egypt might not be forgotten, much less may this Redemption which our Lord hath wrought. And as the Passover was commanded that they might not forget their freedom from Egypt, so is this Sacrament appointed that we might never forget a greater freedom which our Lord hath purchased for us from the tyranny of Sin, and the bitterness of death. There was a mercy in that deliverance, but in this a miracle of mercy: God in that shewed his love to his people, but in this there are all the dimensions of love; here's breadth, and length, and depth, and height, here's
a love

a love which passeth knowledge, Eph. 3. 18, 19. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, Joh. 15. 13. But our Saviours love hath out-stript this, and exceeded it greatly, for he died for his enemies, And God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,

*Lucian. Toxar.
seu de Amicitia.*

Rom. 5. 8, Our Books tell us many stories of the great love that one friend hath shewed another; but none of them tell us of such a kindness to enemies as what our Saviour shewed in his Death. Here's a love that out-strips not only all the Laws but all the examples of friendship; nay a love that surpasses the love of Women. Our Saviour became poor that we might be rich; he died that we might live, he became a Son of man, that we might be made the Sons of God, and left his glory that he might shew us the way to it. And by his sufferings and death hath become the Author of eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him, Heb. 5. 9. Indeed God wrought many deliverances for his people the Jews by the hands of his servants Moses and Joshua, and the Judges and Kings of Israel; but all these together did not work so great a deliverance as our blessed Saviour did when he made his Soul an offering for Sin, when he despised the Cross and the shame of it, and wrought an eternal Redemption for us. They delivered Gods people from their ill neighbours, our Saviour

our hath delivered us from our *sins*, and from the *evil men* our selves. They delivered them from *Tyrants*, he hath delivered us from the power of the *devil*, and from an *eternal slavery*. They saved their *bodies* from *slavery* and *hondage*. Our Saviour saves our *Souls* from *sin* and *death*. They fought for their people, our Saviour suffered and died. They delivered them for a *time*, our Saviour for *ever*. They saved the *Jews*, but our Lord is the Saviour of *mankind*. *Jacob* in his last words to his Sons tells them what shall befall them in the last days; and when he comes to *Dan*, he tells him he shall be a *Serpent* by the way, an *Adder* in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward, Gen. 49. 17. This the *Jews* understand to be foretold of that great deliverance which *Sampson* of this tribe of *Dan* should be an instrument of; who wrought a great deliverance of his people from the *Philistins*. But then *Jacob* presently adds in the next words, *I have waited for thy Salvation*, O Lord, v. 18. The meaning of which words according to the same *Jews*, is this, as if *Jacob* when he had foreseen the deliverances which should be wrought by *Gideon* and *Samson*, had said thus, *I do not expect the deliverance of Gideon and Samson, which will be but a temporal deliverance; but thy Salvation, O Lord, is that which I expect, for thine is an eternal Salvation*. They were indeed deliverers

*V. Targ. Hierosol.
& Jonath. in
locum.*

ners of Gods people, but none of them could do that which our Saviour does, *who saves his people from their sins*, Mat. 1. 21. *And bleisseth us in turning away every one of us from our iniquities*, Act. 3. 26.

So great a Salvation hath our Saviour wrought for us; so great a love hath he shewed in laying down his life for us, that it ought never to be forgotten as long as the world endures. And that it might never be forgotten, our Saviour hath appointed the Sacrament of the Lords Supper to be a standing memorial of his great love in dying for us. *Do this*, says he, *in remembrance of me*. We are indeed ready to receive mercies, and also very ready to forget that they are bestowed upon us. And therefore God hath taken this care that we might never forget them. He did so with the *Jews*, who were a very unthankful people, and very prone to forget him that had done so many kindneses for them. Lest that people should forget their Creator, God appointed the *Sabbath-day* to be observed in memory of the *Creation* of the World, *Exod.* 20. 11. When he brought the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, he ordains the *Passover* in memory of that deliverance, *Exod.* 12. And besides that, he obliges them severely to observe that feast, and frequently by his servants puts them in mind of that deliverance; and over and above appoints the *Sabbath-day* also (which was at first commanded upon another score) as a weekly remembrance

brancer of that great deliverance, *Deut. 5. 15.* But he that delivered them out of *Egypt* did also carry them through the Wilderness, and in memory of that mercy in redeeming them from the travels and pilgrimage of the desert, he appoints an Anniversary feast, viz. the feast of *Tabernacles*, *Lev. 23. 43.* Other Festivals there were, and divers memorials of the mercies of God shewed to that people, and to their fathers. They who were so apt to forget Gods mercies were provided with such services as should put them fairly in mind of them. God hath done thus mercifully with us also; He hath not only given his Son to die for us (than which there cannot be a greater mercy) but he hath ordained this Sacrament as a perpetual memorial of so great a love.

And as among the *Jews* those services which God required were very proper remembrancers and monitors of the mercies they had received, so it is in the case that is before us. Their Sabbath which did succeed their six days labour put them in mind of Gods creating the World, and ceasing from those works. Their Passover brought to their mind the mercies of God in their Redemption from *Egypt*. Their feast of *Tabernacles* plainly shewed them the estate of their Fathers in the Wilderness. And so the Sacrament of the Lords Supper does after a lively manner represent unto us the Death of our Blessed Saviour. He died indeed a great while since, and

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at a place far remote from us; there could be but few that were eye-witnesses of what was then and there done; but few in proportion with those that would be concerned in his death. And therefore God out of his great mercy to us hath ordained this service, that what we could not see done at first, we might see repeated in the Sacrament afterwards. Here we have Christ crucified represented to us: The Bread and Wine put us in mind of his Body and Blood. And when we see the Bread broken, and the Wine poured forth we are taught to remember the Passion of our Lord; how his body was broken and bruised, and his blood was shed for us. God would have us *lift up our hearts* from these symbols and signes to that which is signified and represented by them. And if we do so we may by our faith see Christ crucified before our eyes. And that which was done so long ago, and so far off will be anew represented unto us. The Apostle tells his *Galatians* that *before their eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth, and crucified among them*, Gal. 3. 1. Yet certain it is that Jesus Christ was crucified at *Jerusalem*, a place very far remote from the Country of the *Galatians*: But yet he that was crucified at *Jerusalem* may well be said to have been *evidently set forth before the eyes of the Galatians*, and crucified among them.

Verse Syriac. also; i. e. Jesus Christ crucified was as it were painted and most lively

lively represented unto them. They did not see him indeed hanging on the Cross at *Jerusalem*, but yet by the preaching of the Gospel, and celebration of this Sacrament they might behold Christ crucified, and that which was done at so great a distance would by these means become as if it had been done before their eyes.

But it is not a bare historical remembrance that will serve our turn neither. It is no hard thing to be able to remember the history of the Passion of our Blessed Saviour: But our remembrance of it must be,

(1) Affectionate and vigorous, as we remember the death of a dear friend that died, and died in our quarrel and defence, who at once shed his blood for us and for the truth. How passionately can we rehearse the praises and preserve the memory of such an one as this: 'Twas thus with our dearest Lord, he he fell a Sacrifice at once for the testimony of the truth, and for the sake of our precious Souls. He died that he might rescue us from eternal misery and death. And this we must remember when we do remember the death of our Blessed Lord.

(2) With all thankfulness to God for so unspeakable a mercy. Let us awaken our psalter and harp, all our powers and faculties, and all that is within us to praise his holy name. Let us have our hymn of praise, *Mat. 26. 30.* 'Tis an heavenly feast we are going to, and
C who

who goes to a feast with a sad countenance or heart? *Let us be filled with the spirit: Speaking to our selves in Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, and making melody in our hearts to the Lord,* Ephes. 5. 18, 19. We are Gods guests at this time, and God loves we should be chearful and rejoyce. He would have the *Jews* so in their Festivals, *Deut.* 16. 11, 14. And certainly we have more reason to be so than they, *God having provided some better thing for us,* Heb. 11. 40. This Sacrament is an Eucharist or service of praise, and as such was observed by the first Christians, *Who breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people,* Act. 2. 46, 47.

(3) It must be such a remembrance as works in us a detestation against our sins which put our Blessed Saviour to death. Conceive you saw him hang upon the Cross, and saw the nails pierce his hands and feet, that you heard him cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And that you saw the blood he sweat, and the thorns he wore. That you saw the Sun darkened, the Dead arise, and the rocky Earth rend in pieces; certainly if your hearts were not more hard than the rocks, you would relent; especially when you consider that all this was for your sins, and that he died that you might live. 'Twas thy Covetousness that betrayed him. Thy lust that

that made him bleed. Thy unbelief and wickedness that loaded Him with the Cross, that crowned Him with thorns, that nailed his hands, and pierced his side, and filled his Soul with horror and amazement. This should work in us a great indignation against our Sins, as that which crucified our dearest Lord. Should a tender Mother lose a Child by a knife, or some other instrument, that is but the occasion of its death, Surely she would not endure to see that instrument in her sight. If we loved our Saviour, we should hate our sins which made him bleed and bow his head. Since 'tis a most certain truth that he that commits sin does more displease; *i. e.* does that which is more against the mind and will of Christ, than *Judas* that betrayed him and those that hanged him upon his Cross. And therefore as you pity your Saviour add not to his sorrows, as you have any compassion to Him add not to the bitterness of his Soul. Bring not with you instruments of cruelty when you pretend to remember his love he shewed in his death. But think thus rather that if God did not spare his Son, that sin might not go unpunished, that he will much less spare you who go on in your sins, and love them.

III. Another great end of this Sacrament is that Christians might by it be united together in the strictest bond of love and charity. It is indeed a feast of love, and that which does

not only joyn us to God, but firmly cements us also to one another.

This indeed is the great Commandment of our Blessed Saviour, that we should love one another as He hath loved us, *Joh. 15. 12.* Nay he hath made this the mark by which his followers shall be known from the rest of the world. *By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have love one to another, Joh. 13. 35.* And in the early days of Christianity the Heathen World took notice how the Christians loved one another. Nay the Holy Scriptures tell us that in the beginning of Christianity, *The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul, Act. 4. 32.* And they shewed their love to one another by making all things common, that there might be no lack and wants among them, *Act. 2. 44, 45.* But then 'tis added when it was that they loved one another thus greatly, viz. While they continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, *ver. 46.* Whiles there were frequent Communions in the Church of God, there did remain a fervent Charity among Christians. But when they were but seldom celebrated, Charity also grew cold.

For indeed this Sacrament was appointed for the keeping up a fervent charity among the followers of Jesus. And very plain, methinks, are the words of the Apostle to this

purpose,

purpose; *We being many are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread,* 1 Cor. 10. 17. *i.e.* We that partake of this Heavenly feast are by that made one, we are of one kind and mass; just as Bread and Wine though they be made up of several grains and grapes, yet are made up together into one similar body, all whose parts are homogeneous and of the same sort or kind; so we that are Christians, though as men we differ from one another, and have our several affections and designs distinct from each other, yet for all this by the death of our Saviour, and by the participation of the Sacrament of our Lords Supper we are made one; we are reconciled to the same designs and interests, acted by the same Spirit and by this Sacrament united into one Spiritual body. However we are otherwise *divided*, it is the intention of this Sacrament to make us *One*. And therefore the Ancients called the Eucharist, *Συναγίς*, *i.e.* a Collection or gathering together into one those who were otherwise divided. The partaking of this Feast makes the partakers of one mind and heart where they do receive it worthily. What is said of *Pilate* and *Herod*, when our Saviour was about to suffer, *That they were the same day made friends together, who before had been at enmity between themselves*, Luk. 23. 12, The same is true of all true Christians that do aright partake of this Sacrament of the death of Christ, they

are now united and reconciled, and made of one heart and mind.

And this seems to be the great design of the Eucharist to unite Christians together in the closest bond of unity and love. When the Passover was commanded among the *Jews*, they were most severely commanded to put away leaven when they kept that Feast. When we keep this Feast we must be sure to lay aside all malice and hatred; to that sense the Apostle expounds that passage to us, *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened; for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth,* 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. He that bears malice in his heart must stand away and not partake of these holy mysteries. Such a man will not be welcome to this Table of the Lord. If we like *Cain*, hate our brother, God will have no respect unto our offering, *Gen. 4. 5.* God is pleased to see us at unity with one another, and till then our sacrifice is an abomination unto the Lord. *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembreth that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift,* Mat. 5. 23, 24. God is willing to stay for his offering till we are reconciled to one another.

And as we ought always to have our hearts clear from the malice and bitterness which we are too apt to bear against our brother; so especially when we keep this Feast, we ought to see to it that we be purged from the leaven. For we do now keep in memory the death of Christ. And certainly Christ in his death gave a great proof of his love to Mankind, and a great example also of forgiveness of enemies. And methinks we should be ashamed to remember the death of Christ, who died for Sinners, and prayed for his enemies, when we retain our hatred and ill-will against our brother. For if we did but rightly consider it, we shall find the death of Christ a very effectual means to destroy out of our hearts all malice and ill-will, and hatred to one another. Well may we forgive one another when Christ forgave his greatest enemies, and prayed for his Crucifiers, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* We may well contain our selves and be quiet when we are reproached and falsely accused; when our Saviour, *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; yet when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously,* 1 Pet. 2. 22, 23. Methinks when Christ hath shewn such a love to us, it should be no hard matter for us to love one another. When Christ hath paid so great a debt for us, we should not readily pull our brother by the

throat for every trespass. If we did but reflect upon the death of Christ, as we ought to do, it would kill and destroy that malice and hatred which lodges in our hearts. We should not find it so hard a matter to forgive our enemy, to do good against evil, and to pray for our persecuters and slanderers, if we did; as we ought to do, keep in mind the death of our dear Lord and Saviour.

But then they that eat of the same bread, and drink of the same cup, that partake together at the Table of their Lord must needs think themselves obliged to love one another. For if eating and drinking together have been thought an argument of kindness and friendship, certainly then the partaking together of these divine mysteries must needs call for the sincerest amity, and the most fervent charity amongst those that do partake. Those that feed at the same Table, that retain to the same Lord, that wear the same badg and livery that shews to whom they do belong, and live by the same Laws, and must therefore hope for the same reward, these men sure must needs think themselves obliged to love one another. Their partaking together of these mysteries is a sure pledg of that mutual kindness which is between them. When the Psalmist would describe the greatest profession of friendship and intimacy between himself and his professed friends he does it in these words, *We took*
sweet

sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company, Psal. 55. 14. We profess our selves Children of the same household and family when we do partake together of this holy Feast. We declare that we are members of the same body when we eat of the same bread, and drink of the same cup, which is that provision, that heavenly aliment, which our Lord hath provided for his Church. And therefore we ought to be concerned for one another as members of the same body are. We ought to care for the good and benefit each of other, and to shew by our lives and actions that we do believe these things to be true. We ought indeed to be in perfect charity with all men; and as we have opportunity to do good unto all men too, but more especially are we obliged to do good unto the household of faith.

The ancient Christians surely understood this very well. They shewed a great kindness to those who did communicate with them. When they received this holy Sacrament they saluted one another with an holy kiss in token of that mutual love and kindness that was betwixt them. And as they had their *kiss of love*, so after the Celebration of this Sacrament they had their *feast of love*, where they did eat together in common in testimony of the mutual kindness which was between them. And again, they had their *labour of love also*; i.e. They made collections for those that were poor among

mong them, or in distress; they were not only at peace with one another, but they had also a very great compassion for all those that were afflicted.

But alas, we are not what they were; that which was to them the bond of unity and love, we have made a bone of contention and quarrel. We *dispute* now, we do not *live*; we are full of *questions*, and *void of charity*. We are not willing to be so *good* as those Primitive Christians, though we desire to seem as *wise* as they. We are greatly declined from that love and unity that then obtained. And we are not willing to be restored to that zeal and fervour which was to be seen in them. And now we are run into two great extreams; for either we receive this Sacrament with the leaven of malice in our hearts, and when we are unprepared for it, and then this holy Table becomes our snare: Or else we will not receive it at all, lest we should be obliged severely to be that, which we are not willing to become.

IV. Another great end of this Sacrament is that we might have a full assurance of Gods readiness to bestow upon us a pardon of our sins, and the great mercies of the Gospel which God hath declared himself ready to bestow upon all those who perform the conditions of the new Covenant. God is not only pleased to make a Covenant with us, and plainly to declare his readiness to perform his part, but also

also gives us his seal, and so does abundantly assure us of his own stedfastness and constancy.

For such is our weakness, so great our unbelief that we need very great supports, and an abundant assurance to buoy up our sinking and incredulous hearts. And on the other hand so great is the mercy and condescension of our gracious God that he is ready to consider our frame, and to give us the greatest security and assurance. He does not only promise us the pardon of our sins in his New Covenant, but he also gives us his seal to it besides; *That so by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us,* Heb. 2. 18. Thus graciously does God deal with Mankind. He gives them his Covenant and his Seal too. He not only gives out his decree in the expressess of his will, but he *signes* and *seals* it also that we may be assured that it is unalterable; as it is said the Law of the *Medes* and *Persians* in that case was, *Dan. 6. 8.* God makes a Covenant with *Noah* and his Sons that he will no more destroy the earth by a flood; but to give them still a greater assurance, he sets his bow in the cloud as a token of this Covenant between himself and them: (*Gen. 9.*) And when God makes a Covenant with *Abraham* and with his seed, he does command Circumcision as a token of this Co-
venant

venant between himself and them, Gen. 17. 11. God does not only give us his Word, but his Sacrament the token of his truth. This God does, because he is gracious, and because our wretched unbelief is so great that we need the utmost assurance. And this certainly is one great end of the Sacrament, that we might have always with us a *sure pledg* of the favour and grace of God; that we might not miscarry through our unbelief, that we might have a full assurance that God would pardon our sins if we do on our part perform the condition of the New Covenant. Our Saviours words are plain to this purpose, *This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*, Mat. 28. 26. This Sacrament is the instrument of conveyance, the Seal that gives us right and title to this great grace and mercy of God. We receive in this Sacrament the Body and Blood of Christ, and the benefits of his Death: The pardon of our sin is here made over to us; God hath given us visible pledges of his readiness to forgive our sins. And because we are very jealous and suspicious, very unapt to believe that such wretches as we are should be received into Gods favour, he hath given us this abundant assurance. He receives us to his own Table, gives us under the symbols of Bread and Wine, the Body and Blood of his Son, who died for our sins, and entertains us with this food of heaven,

In that God hath given us his Son, and given him up to death, and this death he underwent for our sins, we have a great assurance that with him he will give us all things, and that he is ready to pardon those sins for which our Lord hath shed his blood. But then this blessed Sacrament is greatly efficacious towards the obtaining of this pardon, because it is the ministry of the Death of Christ, by which our pardon was procured.

But then we must be careful that we do not think that our pardon is procured by any inherent vertue of the outward elements of Bread and Wine, or that our partaking of these alone will procure this remission of sins: For the pardon of sin is procured by the blood of our Saviour, and we attain not to it without a lively faith, and a performing the conditions of the Gospel. But if we do this we have good assurance of pardon when we partake of this Sacrament which is the Ministry of the Death of Christ. But then we must have a faith in Christ; that is, as we eat the outward Element of Bread, and drink the Wine, so must our Souls receive our Lord Jesus Christ. They must entertain him with all his precepts, and in all his offices. Our hearts must receive him as our Prophet to instruct and teach us; as our Lord to rule and govern us, as well as our Priest to make a satisfaction for us to the Divine Justice. And as we hunger and thirst for our bodily food, so

so we must hunger after the Spiritual provisions that Christ hath made for our Souls. We must earnestly breath after righteousness, and purity of heart. There must be in our Souls an hunger and a thirst, they must receive and feed, and not our bodies only. *It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing,* Joh. 6. 63. As our mouth eats the outward element, so faith must eat too. And it is not a *notion*, not an *empty nothing* that will feed a lively faith: It conveys as real a supply to the Soul as the outward Elements do nourishment to the body. The body receives the outward symbol, the Soul the inward grace. We eat and drink the Element, but 'tis the Soul that feeds on the thing signified and represented.

And therefore let not the Sinner who lives in his sin and loves it, think to obtain his pardon by partaking of this Sacrament. This Sacrament will not avail such a man as this is; for the death of Christ will profit him nothing if he lives in his sins and loves them; and therefore this Sacrament can avail him nothing, it being but the annunciation of the death of Christ; and therefore it cannot save that sinner whom the death of his Lord does not avail. It is a vain thing for such a sinner to take sanctuary here. If there be not in our Souls a principle of new life it is not the outward Elements of Bread and Wine that will help us. God is ready to forgive our sins, (and

we may see it clearly in this Sacrament) but while we love our sins we are incapable of this grace of God. 'Tis the burdened and the laden sinner that shall find this favour.' 'Tis he that hates his sin and strives against it. These are those whom Christ came to seek and save. 'Tis not the outward work will save us if there be not in us the grace of God. There is no pardon in the Gospel for the obdurate and impenitent sinner, and therefore we may not look for it in any of the exterior offices of Religion: And therefore let no man deceive himself in this matter. He that comes in his sins out of hopes of a pardon will be so far deceived, that instead of obtaining a pardon for his former guilt he will contract a greater, and instead of preventing he will but increase and enhance his own condemnation.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

I Shall now mention some of those practical inferences which the Several before-named do suggest unto us.

1. If this Sacrament be intended for a renewal of that Covenant we entered into in Baptism, we may see what great reason we have at this time to examine our selves, and to bewail our misdeeds, and strengthen all purposes of amendment of life. The end of its institution does most severely and indispensably require all this at our hands. We must prepare our selves to meet the Lord that he may be sanctified by us when we draw nigh unto him. We read that at the giving of the Law when the *Israelites* entered into Covenant with God, how solemnly they were prepared for it, (*Exod.* 19. 14, 15.) lest their uncleanness should render them unfit for so great a work. God is holy, and they that make their approaches to him must be so likewise: We must purifie and cleanse our hearts, and cast out every thing which does defile before we are fit to make so solemn an address to Almighty God. *God will be sanctified in them that come nigh him*, Lev. 10, 3. Certainly God

is too *wise* to be *imposed* upon and *mocked*; too *holy* to *behold* our *iniquities*, too *just* to *clear* and *absolve* the *obdurate* and *impenitent* sinner. We must not come to this holy Table before we have examined our own hearts, and bewailed our sins, and come we must with full purposes of amendment of life. If we cannot find that we are thus prepared we must not dare to adventure. If we find that we love our sins and are not willing to part with them we shall eat and drink damnation to our selves when we eat of this bread and drink of this Cup.

2. Hence also we may see the great obligation that lies upon those which do partake of these holy mysteries to lead holy lives for the time to come. It is no small sin after we have been partakers of this Sacrament of the Lords Supper to relapse into our former sins and misdeeds. It is dangerous looking back after we have so solemnly set our hand to the Plough. When *the unclean spirit is gone out of a man*, and after that his house is *swept and garnished*, if then he shall *return* thither again, the *last state of that man will be worse than the first*, Mat. 12. 43, 44, 45. A relapse is many times of greater danger than the first disease. 'Tis always so in spiritual things. He that commits the same sin after he hath communicated contracts a greater guilt. He does not only sin against his *Conscience*, but against his most solemn *Vow* and *promise*. He sins against greater

D

grace,

grace, and with greater scandal; he offends them that communicate with him, and opens the mouths of them that do not. He does by his Saviour as *Judas* did, he *eats* of his *bread*, and lifts up *his heel against him*, Joh. 13. 18. The sin of an unbeliever is great, but this is much greater still; this is the highest treachery and falseness. We betray Christ when yet with *Judas* we kiss him, and salute him with an *Hail Master*. Nothing can be more detestable than this is. No wonder that the rude Soldiers and the Roman *Pilate* should be unkind to our Saviour, but that a Disciple should deny him, and betray him, this is that which swells the sin to the greatest magnitude.

You then that eat of his body and drink

καθάγνισέ σε τὴν
δεξιάν, τὴν γλῶτ-
ταν, τὰ χεῖλη, ἃ-
περ ἐγένετο πρὸς
τοῦ τοῦ ἐπιβάσει
τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Chrysostom. in
1 Cor. 11.

his blood, have you a care that you betray him not. For shame let not those hands minister to oppression or injustice that have received the Body and Blood of Christ. Let not oaths, lyes, and filthiness proceed out of

that mouth into which the Body of our Lord hath entered. Let those vessels be kept clean which have been the receptacles of these sacred Mysteries. Let them be shut up, as the Gate in *Ezekiel*, against every evil thing, *because the Lord the God of Israel had entered in by it*, Ezek. 44. 2. Let there be no passage for any thing which would defile the man, where thy

Lord

Lord hath entered. You have taken Christ for your Lord, have a care now that sin do not reign in your mortal bodies. Do not despise the Blood of Christ, *who died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again,* 2 Cor. 5. 15.

Know this that if you sin wilfully now, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries, Heb. 10. 26, 27. God will not be mocked by those that trample on the Blood of his Son: *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* You run into an unspeakable danger whatever you may think of it. You have entered into Covenant with God and you cannot fall back without contracting a great guilt unto your selves. It was the ancient manner that when a Covenant was made they did slay a beast, shed its blood, and cut it asunder, Jer. 34. 18, 19. in token that he that did not stand to his Covenant should himself be obnoxious to the like severity. When God makes a Covenant with us in the Gospel, he gives up his Son to death; the blood which he shed is the blood of this Covenant, (Heb. 13. 20. & 10. 19.) If now we transgress and trample upon the blood of Jesus we are liable to all the wrath of God which our Lord endured, and to bear it also to all eternity. And though we may escape temporal plagues, yet will it

be worse for us if we fall into hardness of heart, blindness of mind and a reprobate sense. These are the *surda verbera*, those secret and benumbing strokes, those stupifying ones which do not indeed so much amuse our senses, and render us examples to others of Gods displeasure; but yet they are of as ill an Omen and presage, and of a worse consequence by far than the heaviest and forest afflictions that befall our estates or bodies in this present world.

You then that have been cleansing and purifying your selves, have a care that you do not defile your selves again. Let every such man rather say with the spouse, *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?* Cant. 5. 3. Have a care you do not with the dog return to your vomit, and with the sow that was washed to the wallowing in the mire, 2 Pet. 2. 22. I shall conclude this particular with the words of *Siracides*, *He that washeth himself after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again what availeth his washing?* So is it with a man that fasteth for his sins, and goeth again and doth the same; who will hear his prayer, or what doth his humbling profit him, Eccles. 34. 25, 26.

3. Hence we may see what great reason we have to give thanks to God that he is pleased to make that our duty which is so much our rest and for our advantage. He obliges us anew our Covenant with himself, which it

is our greatest interest to do. He obliges us to that which tends to our own happiness and welfare, and without which we could not but be miserable. He will have us remember the death of our Saviour, and his love he shewed us. He will have us partake of a Sacrament that does not only bring us nearer to himself, but also unites us faster in the bond of love to one another. He would that we should partake of these Mysteries, which are the seal of his Covenant, and give us great assurance of his readiness to pardon our sins. That is, in one word, God would have us be happy, and he does oblige us to be so. 'Tis our advantage that he designs in all this. His love is without any interest but that of ours. Who would not enter into Covenant with so good a God? who would not remember the love of so dear a Lord? who would not be knit fast to his brother in closest bond of love? who would not have assurance of the pardon of his sins? These are the greatest blessings that we are capable of receiving; the greatest that Heaven can bestow upon us. What can be more desirable than to be at peace with God, and at unity among our selves? what more reasonable or more to be wished for than that we should remember the love of our Saviour, and receive a good assurance of the pardon of our sins? and this is the design, as you have heard, of this blessed Sacrament. It is appointed for such blessed purposes as these. How

suspicious or shy soever we be of it, this is the errand it comes about. It hath a design to make us more holy and more happy than we were. This is all the plot which it hath upon us ; God hath not only been pleased to give us his Son to die for our ransom, but he gives him again in this Sacrament for our food and nourishment. O the unspeakableness of Gods kindness to us ! Methinks every man should break forth into his praises ; methinks he should say, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things,* Psal. 103. 2, 3, 4, 5. Methinks our mouth should be filled with praise and thanksgiving to God, for these his kindnesses to our Souls.

4. Hence we may learn, what great reason we have to embrace so blessed an opportunity of becoming better. Great are the benefits which would redound to us from a frequent and a devout Communion. And certainly this service must needs be welcome to that Soul that is weary of his sins, and heartily and earnestly desires to be rid of them. For it lays a most severe obligation upon us to search our hearts, and amend our ways, and set things straight between God and our own Souls. This service obligeth us to that which every pious Soul would chuse of it self. It binds us to be faithful

faithful servants of God, to be hearty lovers of our brother, to be grateful acknowledgers of the love of Christ, and diligent seekers after the pardon of our sins. Who would not welcome such a blessed opportunity that loves his God and is weary of his Sin? who is it that desires to lead a new life that would not be glad of so excellent a service? 'Tis to be feared we are too much wedded to our sins, when we refuse this service which would divorce them from us! 'Tis much to be feared we have no great sense of the love of our dying Saviour when we will not upon his command, *Do this in remembrance of him.* Or that our sins are no burden to us when we despise the evidence of our pardon. If we did but worthily partake of this Sacrament, we should be more fit to live and more prepared to die. We should be more fervent in our services to God, and more sincere in our love to our brother; the love of Christ would constrain us to obedience, and his Commandments would not be grievous to us. This would put an end to our unnatural differences and quarrels, it would restore love and charity, it would deliver us from our slavish and dreadful fear of death. In a word it would change this *earth* into a kind of *heaven*; and him that is now a cold professor of Religion, it would make this *sinner* become a *Saint*, and a zealous doer of the will of God.

Such a mighty change would a frequent

and a worthy participation of these mysteries introduce into the world. It would bring back the primitive spirit into the hearts of Christians; when Communion were frequent and devout, then did every holy and good thing obtain. And were they again restored, the Devils Kingdom, which hath now gotten ground, would not only shake but fall to the ground. This would overturn his strong holds, as the barley-cake of *Gideon* did the tents of the men of *Midian*.

And therefore no wonder that he labours so greatly by his instruments to prevent this, which would subvert his Kingdom. And this is so effectually done that now the professors of Christianity either partake amiss or not at all. This is the case of many, I wish I could not say of the most of Christians. Nay and those that do not receive at all are grown witty too, they think they can defend themselves from being guilty of a default. I shall not here examine what they have to say for themselves; but yet this I shall say that the command of our Saviour for our Communicating is so plain, and the reason of it so great that nothing can discharge us from it, but either the impossibility of doing it for want of opportunity, (which we cannot plead) or a countermand from him that gave us the law which we must never expect. Nothing else can discharge us, not our common excuses, not our mistaken and scrupulous Consciences, which cannot

cannot evacuate the Law of God; for here-
after we shall be judged not according to what
we *ween* or are of *opinion* in the case, but by
a more sure and unerring rule, the Word of
God. I conclude this particular, only adding
that if we diminish or take from the Word of
God, and deny that to be our duty which
the Word of God requires, we have too much
reason to fear that God will take away our
part out of the book of life, *Rev. 22. 19.*

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

I Shall now proceed to shew how we may become worthy partakers of this Sacrament of our Lords Supper, which was ordained for such great ends, and conveys so great a blessing to all those that partake of it as they ought. For there is something to be done by us before we can be prepared for so great a service. Now before I proceed to shew what we are to do towards the preparing our selves, I shall shew the necessity of a preparation in general, or the danger of coming unprepared. And that I shall do in the following particulars.

1. He that cometh unprepared loseth all those benefits which are annexed to a worthy partaking of this Sacrament. Certainly the blessings which we receive when we come prepared are very many and very great. We receive the *pardon* of our *sins*, and *power* against them; we have here a sense and experiment of the *love* of *Christ* to *us*, and an increase of our charity and *love* to one another. We receive here the *joys* of *pure Religion*, and the *foretastes* of Heaven; an increase of *our love* to *God*, and a demonstration also of the
love

love of God to us. This is a most excellent instrument, and very available to the *killing* of our *sins*, and the *reviving* of our *graces*. It makes us more *fit to live*, and both more *ready*, and more *willing to die*. We are here reconciled to God, and also perfectly reconciled to one another. 'Tis the great instrument of pardon, and peace, of love and joy, of faith and holiness. He that comes prepared finds it both food and physick. It nourishes his graces, and it purges away his sins. But whatever blessing he finds, the unprepared finds none. He receives no pardon of his sin, nor yet any power against it. And it were well for the unprepared if this were all, for he does not only not receive a blessing; but,

2. He that comes unprepared receives a very great curse; he contracts a very great guilt and condemnation to himself. And if he would know how great a curse it is let him consider the words of the Apostle, who tells him that he is *guilty of the body and blood of Christ*, 1 Cor. 11. 27. That *he eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*, v. 29. Nor is this all neither, but he brings upon himself bodily distempers, age and death it self. The Apostle adds, *for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*, v. 30. We have enough said to awaken us in these words if any thing be enough. Sicknes and death are the greatest plagues that we dread in this world; and these are the consequents of unworthy

worthy receiving ; but these are the least still. He that comes unprepared as he is guilty of the *greatest sin*, in that he is *guilty of the body and blood of Christ*, so is he liable to the greatest severity and wrath of God, in that he eats and drinks *damnation to himself*. If we would avoid sickness, or an untimely death, if we would not be guilty of the body and blood of Christ, and not be liable to damnation we must prepare our selves for this service. We think *Judas* a wretched sinner that betrayed his Lord, and *Pilate* that delivered him to death, and the *Jews* that crucified him we esteem most miserable sinners ; what are we then if we do all this over again ; if we crucifie our Lord afresh, and tread under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing ; and all this we do if we come unprepared and in our sins : And are so far from being less sinners than the *Jews* who crucified our Lord, that we are indeed therefore greater than they, in that we do this despite to him whom we know ; but they, though they crucified him, yet they did not know him to be the Lord of Glory.

The receiving of this Sacrament serves to some great purpose or other ; it does set us forward either to Heaven or Hell ; it conveys a great blessing, or else it brings upon us a great curse. And as the blessings it brings are great to them that are prepared, so are the curses to him that comes unfit. We either re-

ceive

ceive Christ or else Satan enters into us. And all this is as we come fitted and prepared.

Nor is it to be wondred that it should be so, for it is not the *work done*, but the *manner* of the *doing* of it that turns to our account. God deals with us not as with stocks and stones, but as with reasonable Creatures. We receive his blessings as we are fitted for them. God waits that he may be gracious. He waits on us till we fit our selves to receive his mercy. The Soul that is unprepared is not fit for the blessings that are here bestowed. 'Tis our unfitness to receive that makes us miss of the blessing. 'Tis so in all our religious services. We receive no benefit because we are not fitted for them; nay instead of a blessing we receive a curse. We do not profit by the preaching of the Word; we say, The cause is because we are not prepared hearers. *Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly? Micah 2. 7.* We are worse after the Word we hear, and the Sacrament we partake of, because we are unprepared. And that is the true cause of it. We have an Axiom in Logick, *That every cause does act according to the disposition of the subject*; 'tis true in Spirituals I am sure. That which is to one a great blessing turns to the mischief of another. One man receives life when he eats of this bread and drinks of this cup, another man through his own default eats and drinks damnation to himself. The same heat of the Sun that dis-

solves

solves the ice and melts the wax, yet hardens the clay. The same herb or flower may afford honey to the Bee, and poyson to the Spider. The Red Sea that gave a passage to the *Israelites* did for all that drown the *Egyptians*.

Obruitur Pharaob, patuit via libera
Prudent. (Moyf.

It was the same seed was sown (Mat. 13.) but not the same ground which received it.

Semen & Sator culpa vacant, terra damnanda est.
 We know the Ark of God was the glory of *Israel*, and a great blessing to the House of *Obed Edom*, but yet the *Philistines* found it an intolerable scourge to them. Nay Christ himself that unspeakable gift who is to them that believe the power of God and the wisdom of God, yet was he to the unbelieving Jews a *stumbling block*, and to the Greeks *foolishness*, 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24.

Signum caventi, non caventi scandalum,
Hunc sternit, illum dirigit.

So that it concerns us greatly to fit and prepare our selves for so great a service. It will be unto us as we are prepared for it. Our unfitness will turn life into death, and the greatest blessing that God hath to bestow into the greatest curse. There is a great danger before us as well as a great benefit.

And the effect of this consideration should be that we be very diligent in fitting and preparing our selves. We are apt to make an ill

use of it, and that is this, that because there is danger in coming unworthily, therefore it is the safest course not to come at all. But certainly we never learnt this from the Apostle, for he after he had told his *Corinthians* of the danger of unworthy receiving (*1 Cor. 11.27.*) presently puts them upon examining themselves and then upon eating this bread, and drinking this cup, *v. 28.* We may die by a *famine* as well as by a *surfet*; by not *partaking* at *all* as well as by *partaking amiss*. He in the parable that came to the Marriage-feast without the Wedding-garment was cast into outer darkness, *Mat. 22.13.* But then for those that were invited and would not come at all, the Lord said that none of those *men* should *taste of his Supper*, *Luk. 14.24.* He that comes unworthily runs into a great danger, and so does he that does not come at all. There is but one way of escaping the danger, and that is by calling in Gods help, and a diligent preparing and fitting our selves. Which we have great reason to do now.

3. Because we do at this time make a very solemn approach to God. We are going to his Table, to be his guests, to eat and drink with him. And certainly we had need prepare our selves most diligently did we but rightly consider this. When we go to the Table of a great man we do trim and spruce up our selves. It will well become us to come hither with clean hearts, when we consider that

God hath an all-seeing eye, and that he cannot endure to behold iniquity, God will be sanctified by us or upon us. It is no trifling and small matter that we are now about; We make a very near approach unto God, and had need therefore purge our hearts of our uncleanness lest God make a breach upon us. We had need prepare to meet the Lord, and sanctify him in our hearts. Let us not dare to trifle in a matter of so great weight, nor to go about to mock God, and impose upon him before whom all things are naked and open. Nor let us by any means dare to serve God at all adventures, and do such a work as this is negligently and deceitfully. If we do God will be very far from accepting us or our service.

Wherefore draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purifie your hearts ye double-minded, Jam. 4. 8. Here is before us life and death, let us quit our selves like men, girding up the loyns of our mind, and imploring the aid of Heaven that our Souls may live. No less than the life of our precious Souls is concerned in this matter. As we do order this affair we may either live or die. Now certainly these things that have been named above will be sufficient to awaken us and provoke us to diligence, if they be but believed and considered thoroughly. Having shewed the necessity of preparing our selves I come now to shew how this must be done

done. And first I shall shew what preparati-
ons we are to make before we do partake :
Secondly what behaviour will become us
when we do receive ; Thirdly what we must
do after we have received.

CHAP. IV.

I Shall now shew what preparations we are
to make in order to our worthy receiving
of this Sacrament.

And here I might premise, that in general an
holy life is a very good preparative to this
service. Were our whole life a life of Religi-
on we should be always in a good readiness
for this service. That which fits us to die fits
us to receive this Sacrament of the Lords Sup-
per. And certainly an holy life is the best pre-
parative for death, and therefore it must needs
be very useful and necessary to our worthy
partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ.
He that is fit to receive the Sacrament is fit to
die ; and he that is fit to die is fit to receive
the Sacrament ; one and the same preparation
serves for both. And if an holy life be a good
preparative to death, it must be so for the
blessed Sacrament also. But then though an
holy life make a man *habitually* prepared for
death, yet there are for all that several things
advisable to the dying man upon his sick-bed
in order to his *actual* preparation for his de-
parture

parture hence. And so it is in this Sacrament, though an holy life be a good preparative, yet it is but an habitual one; and it is requisite that he that leads an holy life should notwithstanding that, make an actual preparation before he make his approach to this holy Table. And what we are to do in order to that I shall now shew.

I. It is very requisite we should set some time apart for this work; that we should sequester our selves from our worldly affairs and business, and be at leisure to attend upon the great concernment of our Souls. But when we are alone we must be greatly careful that our worldly thoughts do not thrust in upon us and divert or distract us. We must do as *Abraham* did when he sacrificed, and the fowls came down upon his Sacrifice; he *drove them away*, Gen. 15. 11. We must send away our worldly thoughts and cares at this time that they may not disturb and hinder us, but that we may altogether attend upon that more weighty concern which we are about. If we do not this, we may when we are alone be as much in the world as we are at any other time. And therefore we shall do well not only to set some time apart from our worldly occasions; but when we have done that we must obstinately resolve that no worldly thought shall get entrance into our hearts at that time. We shall be sure to be solicited by

our vain thoughts then, but we must call in the aid of God, and use our utmost diligence to keep them out. We must empty our selves of these buyers and sellers, we must overturn their Tables of exchange, and with a great zeal whip these thieves out of Gods Temple.

This perhaps we may think a matter of some difficulty; but there is nothing greatly difficult to him that is resolved; nothing can be so to him that humbly and fervently implores the grace and aid of God. Besides it is for the life of our Souls that we do this: And if we loved our Souls as well as we do our Estates or Bodies, and (I might say) our sins, we should not find any difficulty in this matter. For, for the sake of these things we can spend many days and not complain; and therefore have no reason to think much of spending now and then a day in consulting the interest of our immortal Souls. And sure I am there are no portions of our time better spent than those we spend in the diligent service of God, and about the securing the eternal interest of our Souls. We shall one day wish that some of those hours which now we carelessly spend in doing nothing, or in doing amiss, which we spend in impertinent visits, or in riot and drunkenness had been spent in our Closets, in fervent prayer to Almighty God, and in caring for our precious Souls. If ever we would have our Souls do well we must sometimes be alone and set apart some portion of our time for our

service of our God. We have our Saviours example for this, though he were much called upon and greatly employed, and that always in doing good to Mankind, yet he finds time to be alone. And rather than neglect it he will defraud himself of his Rest. Thus we are told that he *rises a great while before day and departs into a solitary place, and there prays,* Mark 1.35. He continues in prayer all night, Luk.6.12. And when his Disciples were asleep we find him *praying upon his knees,* Luk.22.41. and *praying more earnestly,* v. 44. So that no man may now think himself excused through the multiplicity of his affairs from his holy solitudes and retirements. Our Blessed Lord found time for these things, though he were so much called upon to heal the sick, and help the needy. We must then separate our selves from the world and from all its cares and pleasures, and devote our selves and our time to the service of God. And as it is advisable that we should do this often, so is it more especially that we should do it before we approach to the Table of our Lord, that we may be at leisure to fit our selves for so great and so excellent a service.

2. It is very necessary that we should examine and try our selves, *Let a man examine himself and so let him eat, &c.* 1 Cor. 11. 28. We must descend into our own souls, and try what we are. This is the duty of every man lest he bring destruction upon himself. No
man.

man is to be too confident of himself; he must bring himself to the rule, and measure himself by that.

We are very apt to think too well of our selves. For we are too forward to judg of our selves by an imperfect rule and measure; to think our selves good because we are not so bad as the worst; or to judg well of our selves because other men judg well of us; or to acquit our selves because our Conscience does not condemn us; or perhaps we judg our selves in a safe condition because we are innocent as to some things, and give an hearty obedience to some of the Laws of God. Or else it may be, that we think our selves in a safe condition because we mean well though we do not always do as we should do. We are ready to call our great sins little ones, and our little ones none at all. Or else we think our selves safe because we are, as we think, of an orthodox belief, or of a more refined sect or party of men. A great many ways there are by which we may deceive our selves, and miscarry eternally. And therefore we had need use a most severe scrutiny and search. For our hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked, and do easily impose upon us. 'Twas a wise speech of one of the Jews, *Hillel. Avoth. c. 2. S. 4.* That a man should not put any trust in himself as long as he lives. And King Solomon tells us, that all the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the Spirits.

Spirits, Prov. 16. 2. We do easily absolve our selves ; for we are partial, and greatly favourable to our own side. We are often heard to say, that indeed we are *great Sinners*, but then we add that we *repent*. That we do not *keep the law* we do confess, but then we profess to *believe the Gospel*. We have *done amiss* we say, but then we do declare that we will be *more heedful* for the time to come ; We have *quarrel'd with our neighbours* indeed, but yet we do give out that we *forgive them*. We have *not done as we should*, but yet we affirm that we *desire to be better*. But all this while it is a great question whether our Repentance, and Faith, our Charity, and purposes of amendment, and desires of becoming better be sincere or not.

For all this while we are supposed not to have examined our selves ; for when we come to do that by the unalterable Law of God we may perhaps find our sins greater, and Repentance less than now we conceive it to be. If we try our purposes of amendment, our Charity and Faith, and desires of becoming better, we may not find them to be that which we would have them be thought to be. It will be well for us therefore that we examine and prove our selves, as the Apostle requires we should, lest we deceive our selves for ever when we take up with that which is counterfeit and insincere. We are easily perswaded to do this when our estates or lives are concerned ; In that case we love to take a sure course, and to search

search into the bottom of the thing. 'Twere well for us we were as curious where our Souls are so nearly concerned. We shall find it worth our while to examine and try our selves. And I shall shew what things they are which we are to examine in order to the fitting our selves for the Supper of the Lord; and the right understanding what will become us in so weighty an affair.

CHAP. V.

THe first thing that we are to examine is what we have done amiss, and what we have omitted. We are obliged to consider our ways and to look back upon our lives and conversations, and observe wherein we have transgressed the holy laws of God. We must make a diligent search into our hearts, and most carefully reflect upon our lives past. And for the better success of this work we may take these following rules.

1. We must be greatly careful that we be not remiss and careless in this search : That we do not search for our sins as some negligent officers search for offenders, whom they have no mind to find out. But as the *Jews* were very curious in searching for leaven, and as the Priest was obliged to be very exact in searching after the Leprosie that did arise in a man or house, so must we be. We must search narrowly, as the faithful Physician does by his Patient whose health he does consult. He does curiously observe the nature of his disease, all the moments of its rise and growth, its symptoms, and its types, that he may know how to help nature, and counterwork the disease. Or as a faithful and skilful workman that would uphold a decaying house, he searches

ches diligently into its several parts, examines the foundation, considers its sides and superstructures, that he may obviate and prevent its fall. So must we do, we must descend into every corner of our hearts, look very diligently over our lives, and well consider our ways that we may find out what is amiss in us. The interest of our Souls is greatly concerned, if we leave any sin which we might have found out, our condition is full of danger. A little leaven leavens the whole lump; and therefore it concerns us highly to be very exact in our search.

2. We must be careful that we make this search by the light of Gods Law. The *Jews* require when men search for leaven against the Passover, that they should do *Pejach. 6.1.5.1.* it by the *light of a Candle*. We had not need be in the dark when we go about such a work as this is, and we had need have a clearer light than that of our own Consciences is. The Law of God is an unerring rule; by this we must try and search our selves. And therefore we had need know this Law or else we shall not be able to judg our selves by it, and consequently very unfit to approach unto the Table of our Lord. By this Law we may find out what we have done amiss. This glass will discover our spots. And though we may think our selves very innocent yet upon our trial we shall find many things amiss.

For

For the Commandment is exceeding broad; We are very apt to say with the man in the Gospel, *all these things have we kept from our youth up*, Mat. 19. 20. But we consider not how far the law of God extends and reaches. We are commanded *to have no other gods before the Lord our God*. We perhaps are ready to think that we do not break this law till we fall down and worship some new Deity. But we are much deceived in this. For by this precept we are obliged to love God above all things, to pray to him, fear him, trust in him, give him thanks, and in all things to prefer him above all the things of this present world. And therefore if we find our selves devoid of the love of God, or (which is all one) full of the love of this world and of our sins; if we find we love or fear, or trust in any thing more than in him; that we do not give him hearty thanks for his mercies, nor yet heartily pray for his grace and assistance, we may certainly conclude that we are offenders against the Law of God. We are commanded that *we should not kill*: Now not only he that sheds his brothers blood but he that hates him, and censures him is guilty of a breach of this Law. *He that hates his brother is a murderer*, 1 Joh. 3. 15. Again, when we are forbidden *Adultery* we are guilty when we look on a woman to lust after her.

For the Law as was said afore, is exceeding broad. It does not only oblige the outward but the inward man; It does not only forbid

us to *do* but also to *think* any evil. When it commands a duty it must be supposed to require all those things which are the means that lead us to it. And when it forbids a sin it must be thought to forbid whatever would induce us to it. We have reason to think our selves guilty not only when we do directly break the letter of the Law, but when we transgress against the inward and spiritual meaning of it. We are guilty not only when we commit a sin our selves but when we make others to sin, nay when we do not reprove and hinder others when we can. There are many ways by which we become transgressors. And there is no better way to find out our iniquity than by comparing our lives with the Law of God.

If those men did but carefully do this, who now pride themselves as better than their neighbours, they might find very foul spots where as now they think all their ways clean. This would shew them those faults which their pride and lust will not now let them see. Our Conscience is many times but an imperfect light, and is always so when 'tis not enlightened from the Law of God. 'Tis that Rule by which we are to measure our selves. And therefore if we would find our sin, let us take this light to direct and guide us in our search.

3. We must be very particular in this search. That we are sinners we may easily find, but
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we must not satisfie our selves in this, but must find out our particular sins which we are guilty of. For if in order to our pardon we must confess and forsake our sins, we had need find them out; if we do not do this it is not like we should confess them and forsake them. For how can we be thought to confess and forsake those sins which we are ignorant of? And if we do not this what hopes can we have of pardon?

Indeed where we cannot by our utmost search find out every sin, we may yet hope for pardon if we humbly and penitently beg it with the *Psalmist*, who prays to God to *cleanse him from his secret faults*, *Psal. 19. 12.* But this we may hope when we cannot find out our particular sin; when we can do that, we must know it is our duty to do it in order to our confession, and our pardon.

In which the Reader may be assisted by the heads of self-examination at the close of the Book called the *whole duty of Man.*

And a thing very advisable it is, that we should have ready by us at such times as this a most particular Catalogue of our sins, and that we do in our private prayers as particularly confess them to God. It is very easie and common to confess our selves sinners to God, but there is a great cheat in that general confession, and if we would have pardon we must be more particular.

4. We must not only make a particular search

search after our sins, but we must also well consider of the degrees and aggravations of them. For all sins are not alike. There are many circumstances that do encrease our guilt, and therefore if we would not hide our fault, we must search after these things.

Now there are several things which do greatly enhance our guilt, and make our sins more exceeding sinful, that give them a deeper dye and stain. Now every sin is a transgression against the law of God, but yet there are some sins which are more hainous than others;

1. As for example, when our sin is such as is not only against the Law of God but against our own *Conscience* also; when we know the Law and our Conscience does make a faithful report of it, and yet we will commit it. *He that knows his Masters will and doth it not shall be beaten with many stripes.* This is no small aggravation of our guilt when we *rebell against the light.* This rebellion is as the *sin of witchcraft.* We have no manner of excuse left us in this case, and therefore ought to humble our selves greatly under such sins as these are.
2. Again when we are *vincibly* and *culpably ignorant*, and bribe or blind our Consciences our guilt is also greatly aggravated. Perhaps we will not know our duty that we may not be thought obliged to do it. Or we have certain arts to bribe our Consciences, or have found out ways to stop their sentence. This is a most hainous aggravation of our guilt and comes

comes up very near to that which was named last. He is not only a very wicked servant that refuses to do what he hears his Master command him, but he is also very wicked that stops his ears, and will give no heed to what he does command him. The one *rebells against the light*, and the other *shuts it out*. The one will *not admit the truth*, when the other will *not obey it*, but detains it in unrighteousness. There are no men so deplorably blind as they that will not see. 'Tis to be feared there is too much of this abroad in the world. Men are afraid of the light and therefore they run away from it. And are therefore like the old Turk we read of, who being conscious that by his Law he ought not to drink any Wine was yet resolved to drink it, and so he did; but before he drank he gave some great shouts; *which he did*, as he said, *to give his* *Conscience warning that it might* *stand away, and not behold his wickedness, nor be guilty of it.* Certainly too many men take this course or else they could never do what now they do. They dismiss their Consciences when they would interpose. And find out ways either to keep them from *speaking*, or else from *being heard*. But whoever hath used these arts hath contracted a great guilt. 3. Another great aggravation of our guilt is that we have sinned after *Vows* of better obedience. And there is something of this to be found in every sin we commit; for it is

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committed against our *Baptismal Vow* when we did most solemnly devote our selves to the service of God in opposition to the Devil, the world, and the flesh. And many of us have made the same Vow again upon a bed of sickness, in times of danger, or when we did partake of the Supper of our Lord. And to relapse after all this does greatly increase our guilt. We are very wretched sinners if we break these *bands asunder, and cast away these cords from us.* 4. But still our sins are again the greater when they are committed and continued in after the singular and eminent *mercies of God* towards us, which *lead us to repentance,* Rom. 2. 4. For now we add the greatest *ingratitude* to our other guilt, and do by that fill up the measure of our iniquity. And there is no man living but may easily find this aggravation in his sins. For certain it is, however we complain of our miseries and needs, we are encompassed about with the mercies of Heaven. And there is no man living so miserable or wretched but if he would but consider and reflect, would easily find this to be a truth. Certainly the hopes that we still have of Heaven, and the means of grace are most unspeakable mercies. But besides, if we look back, we may find many other singular mercies of God towards us which do upbraid us for our great unthankfulness. He hath many times kept our Souls from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling. He hath

hath long waited for our return, who might long ago have placed us among the dead and damned; which is a plain demonstration that God hath been greatly kind unto us, and so far from desiring our death that he shewed himself (when we did chuse the paths that lead to death) desirous that we should turn and live. 5. That our sins are committed under the *means* of *grace* is still a farther aggravation of our guilt. The Gospel hath provided us sufficient help and assistance to do the will of God. If we do amiss it is because we will not use the means which God hath offered us that we might become better. There is a sufficient aid at hand if we will make use of it. The Gospel does not only require our obedience but also enables us to obey. If we do but humbly beg the holy Spirit of God, and do it but as earnestly as the hungry child will beg bread of his Father, we shall as certainly receive this heavenly aid, *Luk. 11. 13.* This Spirit *will help our infirmities*, *Rom. 8. 26.* And if he dwell in our hearts we shall find him that *is in us greater than he that is in the world*, *1 Joh. 4. 4.* Now certainly we are very fond of our sins, if we will not do our utmost to get rid of them. The way is easie and plain before us; we may be better if we will not make light of the aid and assistance of Heaven. Our freedom from sin is purchased by our Lord, and offered us in the Gospel, if we accept it not upon such easie terms we deserve

to be slaves for ever. 'Twill be but just we should be used as the servant under the Law, who might have his liberty and refused it; he was made a publick shame for his great folly in refusing to go free, when his freedom was offered him: (For that is thought to be the meaning of what followed upon his refusal), for his Master carried him away to the Judges, and at the gate of the house or court of Justice, he bored through his ear with an awl, and he was at once marked and condemned to be a servant for ever, *Exod. 21. 6.* It is no little aggravation of our crime that we do amiss when we have such advantages of being and doing better. 6. That we continue in our sins notwithstanding the very *severe afflictions* which God hath sent upon us to wean us from them is another consideration that does heighten our guilt. Nay we many times commit our sin when Gods hand is striking us; we little regard the discipline of Heaven; when his judgments are upon us yet we will not learn righteousness. There is a mark set upon *Abaz* for this, *In the time of his distress did he yet trespass more against the Lord. This is that King Abaz,* 2 Chron. 28. 22. This was a most heinous impiety, and that which very greatly increased his crimes. 7. Again, another thing which adds a weight to our guilt is this, when we relapse frequently into those very sins which we have formerly confessed to God, and begged his pardon for. When we do confess

fess and sin again, and keep in this black circle of the Devil. In this we do mock Almighty God, and may well be ashamed to lift up our eyes to Heaven if we well consider it. In our dealings with one another we esteem that man void of all ingenuity that begs our pardon, that he hath offended us, and yet holds on to do us the same despites and injuries. How horribly disingenuous are we then when we daily put these affronts upon God himself; when we do often confess but never forsake our sins. 8. Another aggravation of our guilt is when we continue in those sins which we have no temptation to commit, and might most easily avoid. Such are generally the sins of the tongue; there is no natural desire that is gratified by swearing, or by evil speaking, and flandering one another. These are indeed most hainous offences against Almighty God; and their guilt is the greater because there is nothing of temptation to commit them, and they are most easily avoided, whatever the sinner may plead for himself. Certain it is a man may as easily bless God as take his name in vain. To speak well of our neighbour is as soon done as to speak amiss. A good word costs us no more pains than a bad one. And what wretched sinners are we who chuse to do amiss when it is as easie for us to do well and certainly so it is in many cases. 9. Another aggravation of our sin is when we have not only sinned our selves but caused others

others to sin too. This brand was upon *Jeroboam* that he did not only sin himself, but also caused *Israel* to sin. Certainly our own scores will be great enough, we shall not need have the sins of others to account for besides. It will well become us to consider of this when we search into our hearts and lives; whether we have not by our *counsel* or *example*, by our *neglect* and *unfaithfulness* caused others to go astray; who might have been preserved from the error of their way had we been faithful to them in our reproofs and exhortations. 10. Lastly, another degree of our sin is when it is come to an *habit* or *custom*. And this does still make our sin the greater; for now our sin is grown up to a full measure and to the highest stature and pitch, and then we may well reckon our selves to be not only sinners, but workers of iniquity.

It is very advisable that we should consider of these Aggravations of our sins in order to the more full humiliation of our Souls before God. It is very needful that those things which do greatly encrease our guilt should be particularly confessed and lamented in the sight of God. Now it is very evident that the particulars above-named do very much heighten and increase our guilt.

Indeed every sinner does transgress the Law of God, that Law which is holy, just, and good; for sin is the transgression of the Law. But then he that sins against the clear dictates of

his own *Conscience* also, contracts a double guilt ; he that sins after his solemn vows of obedience, adds *treachery* to his other guilt ; and he that sins after many mercies, adds *ingratitude* to his other sins ; every sin makes us obnoxious to Gods displeasure, but yet are there many degrees in our sins which do greatly aggravate our fault, and introduce a new and greater guilt upon us. And certainly to abound in sin under the greatest means of grace ; to continue in our folly when the rod of God lies heavy upon us ; to commit the sin which it is so very easie to avoid ; to repeat our sin when we have confessed and bewailed it, to sin and to cause others to sin also ; to contract habits and customs of evil doing ; these are things which are by no means to be forgotten in our search, because they do import so much of guilt, and so great a degree of wickedness.

But all that hath been said is but relative to something else ; we are not fit to receive the Sacrament as soon as we have found out our sins. The *Jews* were not only obliged to *search* for their Leaven at the Passover, but also to *purge* it out. And their search was in order to their putting it away. They might not leave it where they found it, but were obliged to put it from them ; we must do so by our sins too, and therefore we must now consider what we are obliged to do in the next place.

CHAP. VI.

When we are gone thus far, and have found out our sins we must then put them away by a true and hearty Repentance. Unless we do this we shall eat and drink Damnation to our selves. Now because, though Repentance be very commonly pretended to, yet we do often mistake our selves in it, & take that for it which comes far short of it; therefore it is very necessary we should examine our Repentance, and very carefully try whether it be such as is never to be repented of. For as it is very common with men to think they *have not sinned* when *they have*, so it is also as usual a thing with them to conceit that they *have repented* when indeed they *have not*. For we are too apt to think Repentance no more but a calling to God for mercy, or a general confession that we are sinners, or some sudden purposes of amendment of life, or at most the actual abstaining from our sin. Therefore it will be worth our while that we examine our Repentance, and that we may do by the following Rules.

1. He that Repents is greatly sorrowful for his sin. He is inwardly grieved that he should offend God by his sins; and would rather chuse any loss or trouble than commit his sin again. His sorrow is very hearty and unfain-

ed ; he is grieved in earnest, and his grief is great according to the measure and proportion of his sin and folly. He is vile and base in his own eyes, and is greatly afflicted for his wickedness. Indeed the sincerity of his sorrow is not altogether to be measured by his tears which he sheds : For though tears be reputed the expression of our grief, yet are they but the expression of it : Grief does many times break out this way ; But yet a man may be greatly sorrowful when the greatness of his grief cannot be gathered from the multitude of his tears. Some there are who do easily weep, a very trifling matter will draw forth plenty of tears. But there are others who *grieve more* and yet *weep less*. But then it is still an ill sign if when we have tears for every little trouble, we have none for our sins. We read of one *Alexander Pheræus* that he was ready to weep at the acting a Tragedy, and that he left the Stage that the Spectators might not behold his tears : But then we also read of the same man that he shed the blood of many *Thessalian* Nobles with dry cheeks. Such false tears had that Tyrant at his command. Certainly we may well suspect our selves when we can find plenty of tears upon every little accident which doth disturb us, and yet can find none at all for our hainous offences against God. For it may be reasonably thought, that if our grief were hearty and pungent which we have for our sins, it would

would break out at the same vent which it is wont to find upon all other occasions. Certain it is however that the true Penitent is a very sorrowful man; and though his temper may not give way to plenty of tears, yet his real grief is not the less. Though he do not weep so plentifully, yet he grieves as heartily as he that doth. He does afflict himself for his sin, he judges and condemns himself, and feels as much pain in his Soul, and as cordial a sorrow as he that weeps bitterly.

2. He that truly repents does confess his sins unto God. And this he must do in order to his pardon, *If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, &c.* 1 Joh. 1.9. But then this confession alone does not bring us nearer our pardon, we must confess them with shame and sorrow; we must judge and condemn our selves; and after the most humble manner debase our selves, and beg pardon from God. Our confession must be very humble and very full. We must be particular in it, and not content our selves that we confess our selves to be sinners in general, but we must confess our particular sins unto God. We must confess all the sins we can find, all that we can remember: And then for those which we cannot find, or do not remember, it will be needful that we should pray also for the pardon of them as the *Psalmist* does, *Cleanse thou me from secret faults*, Psal. 19. 12. And as we must confess our sins, so we must also confess the

degrees and the aggravations of them ; for these do greatly enhance our guilt and swell our sins into a very great measure. But all this while we must be very greatly careful that our confession be the result of our real sorrow and trouble of heart. God will not be put off with a parcel of good words. If we do not abhor our sins it will not avail us that we do confess them. God knows our sins already, nor is he pleased to hear us repeat them to him unless we hate them, and be really pressed with the burden of them. 'Tis the burdened sinner whom God hath a respect unto : He that is full of his sorrow for his sin, 'tis he that confesses his sin as he ought ; such a man finds the advantage of an humble confession of his sin unto God, For this gives a great ease to his Soul, which would have been overcharged if he should have kept silence. This the Psalmist tells us, *When I kept silence, says he, my bones waxed old,-----and my moisture is turned into the drought of summer.* But then he adds, *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* And then we find him greatly at ease and quiet, *Psal. 32. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.*

3. He that truly repents does forsake his sins and lead a new life : He does not only purpose but he really does that good which he did intend to do, He does not lead such a life

as he did before. He abstains from the sin which he formerly loved and followed. Nor does he only abstain from it, but he does abhor it, and so he does every sin whatever; and gives up himself to an universal obedience to all the Laws of God. We have no reason to think we have repented till we lead a new and an holy life. 'Tis this which compleats our Repentance, and nothing short of this can give us any assurance that we have repented, and that we are in the state of Grace. It is a vain thing to think that we are the better for purposes of amendment when we do not amend. If we purpose never so much to do well and yet continue in our evil doing we shall be reputed amongst the workers of iniquity. Repentance imports a change both of heart and life. It requires a new life and conversation, and where there is this grace there is this change to be found. The holy Scriptures annex our pardon to our Repentance, but then they require such a Repentance as does import no less than a new life and conversation. Thus we find in the Prophet how the Repentance of a Sinner is expressed, *If he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledg, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live he shall not die, Ezek. 33. 14, 15. Again, if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that*

that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live and not die, Chap. 18. v. 21. And when the sinner is called upon to repent we find it thus expressed, *Seek the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, Isa. 55. 6, 7.* By which it is evident that Repentance implys a change of life, and so indeed it does. That man who resolves to do well and does not do it, does at once mock God, and cheat his own Soul.

4. He that truly repents, his Repentance does arise from his love to God, and an hatred to his sins because they are an offence to God. This is the root from whence Repentance does spring.

The love of God constrains the Sinner to Repentance; and his love to God it is that makes his Repentance of the right kind and stamp. It is very possible that a man may be greatly sorrowful upon the account of his sins, and that he may make a particular confession of them to God, and when he hath done that he may forsake his sins too, and yet not have the grace of true Repentance all this while. And that because this change does not arise from a love to God and an hatred of his sin as it is an offence against God. A man may be very sorrowful for his sins because they have brought a great misery upon him, and do besides expose him to the justice of God. Such a man

man is sorrowful for the ill consequence of his sin rather than for its obliquity and immorality. And perhaps he forsakes his sin too and yet is no true Penitent. For he may leave his sin for many reasons and yet not repent of it. A bare abstaining from sin is no sufficient argument that he hath repented of it. A man may forbear his sin and abstain from it because he cannot follow it, or hath not the liberty to enjoy it any longer, and yet his mind remains unchanged still; or else perhaps he exchanges one sin for another, and chuses a sin which he judges most expedient. But the true Penitent abstains from his sin because he loves his God. Nay, he does not only abstain from his sin but he hates it also.

The reason why he leaves his sin is because he is himself changed in his mind and affections: He now hates what he loved before, and flies from that which before he did pursue. He sees his folly as well as his misery, and leaves his sin, not only because God is just, and will severely punish the wicked, but because he is good and holy, and cannot endure to behold iniquity. He abstains from his sin not only because it is forbidden fruit, but because it is contrary to his nature. He that is not in the state of Grace may abstain from his sin as a sick man does from salt meats (which yet he greatly loves) because his Physician and his interest severely forbid him: But the true Penitent forbears his sin because he finds in his Soul

Soul an antipathy against it ; and not only because it is forbidden.

Such a Repentance as this must we find in our Souls before we can be fit to partake of these holy Mysteries. And well it will become us to be greatly humbled for our sins, and to abhor them when we do commemorate the death of our Lord and Saviour. For he died for sin, and endured the shame and sorrow of the Cross that he might take away our sins, and that they might no longer abide in us. And if we come with our sins to this holy Table we do crucifie our Lord afresh, we do trample upon his precious blood, and count it a common and unholy thing.

5. To what hath been said this must be added, that when by our sin we have not only offended God but also injured and wronged our neighbour, we are strictly and indispensably obliged to make him restitution, as well as to beg the forgiveness of God. We can expect no pardon from God if we do not make amends to our neighbour whom we have wronged. *If the wicked restore the pledg, and give again that he had robbed, &c, he shall surely live and not die, Ezek. 33. 15.* But then if he do not this (or sincerely resolve to do it as soon as he is able to do it) he shall surely die and not live. And his partaking of this holy Table shall be so far from saving him from the anger of God, that it will encrease his guilt and add to his sin. Let no man think that God will

will hear him if he do not make his brother amends for the wrong he hath done him. We have a story in our Books of one *Halyattes*, that his Soldiers did set on fire the Corn of the *Milefians*, and that the fire by the violence of the wind caught hold of the Temple of *Minerva* and burnt it down. It happened sometimes after this that *Halyattes* falls sick, and sends to the Oracle to know what would be the success of his disease; but the Messengers were told by the Oracle, that *they must not expect any answer till the Temple which they had burnt were first repaired*. Most certain it is that we shall have no return of our prayers from Heaven, when we confess and beg the pardon of our sin, unless we do first make restitution where we have wronged our brother. It cannot be thought we have repented if we do not restore. There is no sacrifice will expiate our crime if we do not also make restitution. Under the Law of *Moses* he that had wronged his brother was obliged indeed to bring a sacrifice for his atonement; but then at the same time he was obliged to make a full restitution to his neighbour whom he had wronged; and to add also a fifth part to the principal before he could be forgiven, *Levit. 6*. He that wronged his neighbour was by that Law sometime liable to restore double, *Exod. 22, 4, 9*. Sometimes four and five fold, *v. 1*. where the trespasser

*Herodot.
Clio.*

*v. Maimon:
Hal. Shevu-
oth. c. 8.*

was

v. L'empereur in
Bava Ram.
C.7. S.1.

v. Joma.c.
8. Mishn. 9.
Shulchan
Aruch. H.
Tom. Kippu.

was convicted: But then where the offender became penitent, and confessed his sin; yet in this case he was obliged to make restitution, to add a fifth part, and to bring his offering, Numb. 5. 7. His Repentance, nor his offering would not serve his turn unless he also made amends to his neighbour whom he had wronged. Nay the day of expiation (as the *Jews* teach us) would not avail to take away the guilt which we contracted by doing wrong to our brother.

And we must remember that we are obliged to make restitution not only where we have done an open and forcible injury: As the robber and thief, and violent oppressor are bound to restore what they have wrong'd their brother of by their violent injustice. But we are also obliged to restore what we have by any means unjustly got the possession of. And there are more ways than one by which we may become guilty of injustice. He that overreaches, and out-wits his brother in a bargain, he that in his trading deals fraudulently and insincerely, he that hides and conceals from his neighbour his just rights and dues, such men as these are obliged to make restitution as well as the open robber and the thief. There are indeed very many things which the Laws of the Land do not take notice of, which yet we are obliged to in the Court of Conscience.

ence. And we are before we do receive this Sacrament, very severely to examine our own Consciences; Whether in our dealings with men we have done as we would be done by, and have not detained and with-held our neighbours due from him. Indeed we are come to that pass that we are not afraid of doing an unjust action if we can but do it cautiously and slyly. Nay we are ready to rejoyce when we have cunningly circumvented our brother, and men look upon it as but a little fault, if any at all, when they do craftily circumvent even him that attends upon holy things. But certain it is, whoever does wrong his brother and him that Ministers at Gods Altar, he deceives himself most, and must never look for pardon from God till he have repented of his sin and made restitution for the wrong he hath done.

And what hath been said hitherto of the necessity of making restitution must not only be understood of the wrong we have done to our neighbour as to his goods and estate, but of all other wrongs whatsoever. And particularly of that wrong we have done to his name and credit. We ought to judg the best of all men, and to make the most charitable construction of all the actions of our neighbour: And therefore if we have done otherwise we are obliged to repentance, and to restitution for the wrong which we have done. If we have openly slandered our brother, or
more

more closely and sily undermined his credit and good name, we are obliged in this case to make as far as we are able a reparation. That is, we are obliged to unsay what we have said, and by our words do him honour as we have endeavoured before to do him a discredit. In a word, we are bound to make him such an amends as we are able, or such as may satisfie him to whom we have done the wrong. And when we have done this we must humble our selves greatly in the sight of God for this sin, and be very careful that we sin no more.

Thus must we cleanse and purge our Souls before we dare to come to this holy Table. We must purge out our old leaven that we may be a new lump: Otherwise we shall meet with death there where we might else have found life. And we ought therefore to be very careful and solicitous, lest we should by our remisness and hypocrisie expose our selves to the greatest curse. As we love our Souls then we must not only find out our sin, but we must put it away also; and before we presume to eat of this bread and drink of this cup, we must find in our Souls such a repentance as is never to be repented of.

CHAP. VII.

But as we must come to this Sacrament with a sincere and hearty Repentance for our past sins, so we must also come with full purposes and resolutions of Amendment of Life for the time to come. Now because our Resolution like our Repentance, is many times weak and insignificant, it will therefore well become us to examine these purposes, and resolutions of newness of life, which we so frequently pretend, when we make our approaches to this holy Table. For it is very evident that there are very many men that give good words, and make fair promises of Amendment of Life, upon the bed of sickness, or at the approach of this Sacrament, who yet are so far from making their words good, that they do sometimes run into a greater excess of folly and wickedness than they were guilty of before. We shall therefore do well to try our purposes and resolutions, and narrowly to examine them whether they be such as are like to hold or not, and to that purpose we may consider the following Severals.

1. We have little reason to give credit to rash and sudden purposes of Amendment of Life. The sinner does now and then resolve vehemently against his sin, but it is when he hath

newly surfeited upon his folly, and defiled himself with his sin; then indeed he is sick of it for a while, and resolves to lay it aside. Or perhaps some great and amazing affliction falls upon him, and this brings his sin to remembrance, and he suddenly resolves he will put away his sin and lead a new life; but when this tempest of sorrow is over, and his appetite returns anew upon him, he does easily embrace his folly again, and is as much the child of Satan as he was before. Such a man is troubled at the mischief which his folly hath betray'd him to, and is sick of his sin for a while because he hath tasted of the bitterness which did attend it. But when he hath forgotten the trouble and the pain his sin hath put him to, then he returns to it again. There are those in the world that do frequently resolve against their sins, and yet do as constantly commit those very sins which they so passionately resolve against; and that because it was not their sins which gave them so much trouble but the evil effects and consequences which did follow upon them. For when their sin courts them and smites upon them, when it follows them officiously, and pleads for a reconciliation they readily yield themselves up to their slavery again.

2. We have little reason to trust to that resolution which we have formerly found so very ineffectual. If we find that we have often resolved as much as now we do against our
sins

sins, and yet that for all that when the Solemnity hath been over we have forfeited our good promises we have very little reason to trust our selves. That man who hath been often a partaker of this Sacrament, and hath as often made his resolves to become better, and as often broken them, hath no reason to believe himself, nor to communicate again till he find a change in himself. For it is to be suspected that such a man's resolutions of Amendment are but formal and of course, and that he is only over-awed with the greatness of the approaching Solemnity, and not truly out of love with his sins which he pretends at this time a defiance to. The best evidence of the sincerity of our Resolutions is this that we do as we have resolved: Unless we do this there can be nothing more insignificant than our Resolutions are. And sure it is in every thing else we judg thus. Not he that resolves but he that fights courageously gets the victory. Our resolving does not alone set forward any work, 'tis the putting our Resolutions into practice which does avail us.

3. He that resolves as he ought to do must resolve not only upon the end but also upon the means which lead to it. We are forward to resolve for Heaven at large, but consider not of the way and means which will bring us thither. We are generally willing to be happy but yet we do readily excuse ourselves from the difficulties and severities of an holy

life. He that resolves to be *temperate* must also resolve to avoid his *evil Company* that drew him to that excess, to pass by the door where he is wont to be drawn in. He that resolves to be chaste must also resolve to decline the house of a whorish Woman, and to set a watch upon himself that he be not ensnared with her enticements. He that resolves against his sin must resolve also against every thing which leads him to it; and he will shew himself sincere in his Resolutions by his use of such means as would gain his end. There is nothing more ridiculous than our Resolution if we resolve upon the end, and not upon the means also which lead unto it. We think so in other things; we do not think we shall ever be rich by a resolving only to be so. We must be provident and frugal as well as resolute before we can attain our end. 'Tis not Resolution makes a man learned unless he add endeavours to his Resolution. We may resolve what we will, but we shall be never the nearer to our end unless we use the means as well as resolve upon the end. We never heard of any man that gained his end by resolving upon it, unless he used means for the accomplishing his intention. Resolution does us no good when it is alone. It sets us forward greatly when we use proper means, but unless we do that we are not at all advanced by it.

4. He that resolves as he should do places before his eyes the difficulties and inconveniences

ences which he is like to meet with in his way. Like a wife builder he does forecast his charge before he begin his work; or like a prudent commander he does well consider his number, and strength before he fall upon the army of his adversaries, *Luk.* 14. 28. He that resolves to part with his sin must resolve to be forever deaf to its allurements for the time to come, to subdue all his affections to it, to bid it an eternal farewell. And he may do well to think before hand what difficulties and labours this will expose him to. He will do well to think that he cannot do it unless he be always upon his watch, and denying the cravings of the sensual life. He must be content to cross his own impetuous desires, to displease his companions and familiars, to be houted and laughed at as a fool and coward; He must resolve to persevere in an holy life although he displease his greatest friends, although he lose his worldly goods, aye and his life also. He that resolves as he should do, must set before his own eyes all the difficulties which he is to pass through. Unless he do this it is not to be thought but he will be unprovided for his Christian warfare. And he must do this after the most lively manner that can be, as if he were just ready to be put upon the trial. Let him conceive that he may presently be put to it whether he will displease God or forfeit his worldly ease and wealth: Whether he will suffer or sin; whether he will chuse to

lose his life or Gods favour. He ought not to look upon these things at a great distance, but to suppose them near at hand and ready to be offered to him. This he must do if he will resolve as he ought, and so as his purposes may hold. We resolve rashly and at adventures, and that is the reason that our Resolution comes to no good effect. We do as the Kinsman of Naomi did who when he was asked, *Whether he would redeem the land of Elimelech?* presently says, *I will redeem it*; but then when he is told that he must also buy it of Ruth; he answers that he *cannot redeem it*, Ruth 4. We do just so, we do readily resolve for Heaven very often, but yet when we see what it is like to cost us we do as frequently revoke our word. The man in the Gospel would needs know of our Saviour what he should do that he might *have eternal life*: But when he understands what it will cost him he *goes away sorrowful*, Mat. 19. We do very easily resolve to be happy, but we are not willing to take pains to attain our desires. We are very willing to have our hire but not willing to bear the heat and burden of the day. He that resolves to become a new man must arm himself with the whole armour of God: He must resolve to be hardy and courageous against all the shocks and encounters he is like to meet with in this present evil world. He may expect to meet with many troubles in his way, and therefore must resolve very stedfastly not to alter his mind

mind whatever rubs or obstacles shall lie in his way.

5. He that resolves as he ought to do doth earnestly implore the grace and assistance of Almighty God. He is very distrustful of himself, and therefore does betake himself to the Divine aid and help. He knows that he stands in need of Gods aid, and that without him he can do nothing as he ought to do. He does not rely upon his own strength and abilities, but then he thinks himself only safe when he flies to God for help in the time of need. This is that upon which he does alone rest and rely. He easily foresees many storms arising upon him, he can easily discern that his strength is small, and that his enemies are subtle and strong; and therefore he hath recourse to him who is infinitely wise and strong. He knows not how to fight against his subtle and his potent enemies, but yet he flies to him that can teach his hands to war, and his fingers to fight. He promises nothing from himself but all things from God: He knows not how he shall bear a severe persecution, and a fiery trial, but yet he knows in whom he hath believed, and dares trust him who is always able to support him under the greatest trouble, or deliver him from it. And therefore he does not greatly disquiet himself how he shall be able to bear the sorrows which he is like to meet with, but puts his sole trust in him who can do more than he is able to think. He well remem-

bers that he goes forth in Gods strength, and that God who does enable him to do his will, is able to give him strength to suffer it also. And therefore his eye and his heart is always lifted up to Heaven, and he is full of hope because the Lord is with him. He knows God will not fail him of his aid, and in this confidence it is that he resolves. We are not like to succeed when we leave God out. We may project indeed but it is God who does dispose and succeed our endeavours. We may resolve what we will, but yet shall need the aid of Heaven to bring our purposes to effect. He that would bring his thoughts to pass, must humbly implore the Grace of God; without him nothing is wise, nothing strong. We therefore fall because we trust to our own strength, we then do foolishly when we trust to our own wisdom; we then miscarry when we want Gods grace and assistance. He resolves, well that resolves in the Lord, and that does humbly address himself to him for strength. For as without his leave we could never have been, so it is most certain that without his grace and help we are not able to think a good thought, much less are we able to do any which is good and acceptable in his sight.

CHAP. VIII.

BUT before we come to this Holy Sacrament we must also be endued with a true and a lively Faith. And we must examine carefully whether or not our Faith be unfained and without hypocrisie. Which we have the greater reason to do, because we shall find, even amongst the professors of Christianity, a very false notion of Faith. For as it is sometimes explained it is so far from making us better than we were before, and more fit to approach to God, that it does indeed either not at all advance us in a divine and holy life, or else obstruct and retard us. And for our further help in this we may try our faith by the following Rules.

I. It is not enough to denominate us Believers, that we do strongly believe that our sins are pardoned, and our persons justified in the sight of God. For as there may be a true Faith where there is not this belief, so there may be such a strong belief as this where there is no Faith that is saving. This belief, if it be well-grounded does presuppose a true Faith, and therefore cannot be that Faith it self. There are those that are confident of Gods favour that are yet none of his friends. And if this belief of our good condition be not upon good

good grounds it is a foolish fanſie, not an unfained Faith. We do very naturally love our ſelves, and are very prone to think our ſelves the favourites of Heaven when we are indeed the heirs of Hell. We eaſily grow big with an overweening opinion of our own good eſtate. But how well ſoever we believe of our ſelves, if we do not all this while make a right judgment, we have not a Faith of the right ſtamp.

2. We may not ſay we have a ſaving Faith, becauſe we do confidently expect the pardon of our ſins from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. It is not our bare caſting our ſelves upon Chriſt for pardon that will entitle us to a true Faith. If all that were required of us were this, that we ſhould ſit ſtill, and without any more to do rely upon Chriſt for pardon and for life, for righteouſneſs and eternal glory, certainly it would be no very hard thing to believe; and the world would not be ſo full of unbelievers as now it is. Who would not be ſaved from the wrath to come! who would not be glad to have his ſins forgiven him! Chriſt was never yet unwelcome to any man upon this ſcore. And if this were Faith, Chriſt may always find great ſtore of Faith upon Earth. The vileſt ſinner who loves his folly is yet willing to have it pardoned, and that by Chriſt alſo. The Adulterer and the Drunkard love their ſin indeed but not the guilt and penalty. None are ſo fond of Hell but they will readily
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that Christ should redeem them from it. Nor do they desire to betake themselves to any other Saviour to redeem them from that horror and those pains. The blood of Jesus they do readily fly to for Sanctuary against the destroyer. However men are fond of their sin, yet sure no man is fond of the sting and plague which it leaves behind it. Such a recumbency and relying upon Christ as this is not enough to shew that we have saving Faith. We shall infinitely deceive our selves if we have no other Faith but this. The way to Heaven were very easie if such a Faith as this would bring us thither. Our sins would be no obstacle to us if this were all that were required. Our greatest sins and such a Faith as this might easily consist with each other. We shall not need much labour to perswade men to believe if this were all that is meant by it. We are very willing to be saved at so cheap a rate. We are ready enough to receive the pardon which the Gospel brings us the tydings of. We are content that Jesus should save us from our sins, that is, from the punishment and guilt of them. And we are very forward to believe this was the main, if not the only end of his coming into the World.

3. Nor will the bare assent to the history of the Gospel be enough to entitle us to a saving Faith. We may believe the truth of what we there find and yet be very far from the Kingdom of God. Indeed unless we do this we can-

cannot have a saving Faith ; but it is not our bare believing all this which is a sufficient argument of such a Faith. For saving Faith is that which implys more than the assent of the mind to the truth of that which is revealed and made known. For we are not justified by this assent of our understanding. There are great arguments to evict the truth of Christianity ; so great and so powerful that if we apprehend them aright, we cannot but assent to the truth of what they do infer, and it is not in our power to resist so great an evidence. For we cannot believe what we please, but must needs assent to what is evident to our understanding. And to do this is so far from being a saving Faith that it may belong to those who are not in a state of Salvation. There have been many that have believed the History of the Gospel, and made profession of this belief also, who yet have turn'd Apostates. It is very possible that a man's reason may be satisfied in the truth of Christianity, and yet still he may remain in a very dangerous estate as to his own Salvation ; we find that *many believed in the name of Christ, when they saw the miracles which he did.* That is, they were convinced by the works which Jesus did, that he came from God, and consequently must needs believe what he said to be true. But this Faith in the name of Jesus does not seem to be such as our Saviour thought sufficient ; for it is presently added, *That Jesus did not*

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commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, Joh. 2. 23, 24. Our Saviour would not trust them who yet believed on his name, when they saw the Miracles which he did, And we read of others who are said to *believe on him*; who for all that are called by our Saviour *the children of the Devil*, Joh. 8. 30, 31, 44. We may see great reason to believe the truth of the Gospel (the belief of which we cannot resist) and yet not be endued with a Faith that is saving, if we go no farther.

Indeed the Scripture sometimes speaks as if the assent to the articles of Christianity were sufficient to our Salvation: *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation.* Rom. 10. 9, 10. Again, *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God*, 1 Joh. 5. 1. And again, *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God, every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God*, Ch. 4. v. 2. Again, *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 12. 3. Which expressions seem to intimate that there is no more required to make our Faith saving but this that we do heartily believe, and also profess the articles of Christian Religion.

But certain it is (however we misunderstand our selves, and mistake the meaning of these

these places) such a Faith as this (though it be enough to leave us without excuse) will not save our Souls.

And therefore as to the words of Scripture which are brought to this purpose, there are these two things to be considered.

First, the time in which these words were spoken, and that was in the early days of Christianity, when there was danger in professing the Religion of Christ. In the beginning of Christian Religion, he that made a profession of it exposed himself to the fury of Jew and Gentile. The *Jews* had agreed (while Jesus was alive) *that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the Synagogue.* And the man that was restored to his sight we find *cast out* by the *Jews* for pleading that Jesus must needs be from God, *Joh. 9. 22, 34.* And we read afterwards how very furiously the *Jews* did persecute them who did profess the Faith of Christ. And they who did profess Christ among the Gentiles, were not only derided for the sake of their crucified Saviour, but also persecuted for his names sake. And when they were so it was no easie thing to profess Christianity. Indeed as things are now we do very easily profess our Religion; 'Tis that which agrees well with the Laws of the Country, and the custom of the place we live in. It puts us now to no expence to profess Jesus to be the Christ. We can do it without the fear of Jew, or any other. There is no man suffers

suffers among us because he is a Christian. We may profess that Jesus is risen from the dead, and that he is the Christ without any molestation. And therefore this profession is no argument now that we have a saving Faith. But were it now with us as it was with the first Christians, it would be indeed an argument of our sincerity. If it would cost us our lives or estates to confess the Faith of Christ, then we might hope well of our selves if we retained our confidence unto the end. This would argue us to be the faithful and genuine followers of our Lord. It is an easie thing to profess the Faith when we lose nothing by this profession : But we cannot be his Disciples till we do prefer him before our Houses and Lands, and our Life it self. This was that which the first Martyrs or Witnesses of the Resurrection did. They durst own Jesus to be the Christ though they paid their blood, and sacrificed their lives for him. No terrors, or torments could make them deny the Lord that bought them. The Faith of the Gospel was dearer to them than all the best things of this present life. They that did this were indeed born of God. And their patient sufferings for Christ were an evident argument of the sincerity of their Faith.

Secondly, it is very certain (and this follows from what was said before) that the *confessing of Christ*, the *saying* that he is the Lord, the *believing that Jesus is the Christ*, and

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confessing that he is come in the flesh, do imply a life agreeable to such a profession, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, 5. If the belief of these things have an influence upon our lives, if it regulate and form them to a due and proportionable obedience, then indeed we are born of God and shall be saved. If we believe that Christ is risen, and do (which such a belief should teach us to do) also rise with him to newness of life: If we believe Jesus to be the Christ, and accordingly submit to him in all his offices; if we call him Lord, and then do whatsoever he commands; then indeed we are Gods Children, and shall be saved. It is very evident that no less than this can be meant by those expressions, which are before named; we cannot imagine that it is enough to call him Lord though we obey him not. To believe that he rose from the dead when we lie in the grave of our sin and filthiness. Certainly these expressions import the belief and profession of these truths, and a life answerable to such a belief. Were it not so it would be a most easie thing to be a Christian, and our Faith were very reconcilable with our evil lives. And therefore I add,

4. A true and saving Faith is productive of a good life. We must not only believe that what God hath revealed is true, but we must consent to it, and yield our selves obedient. The Gospel may be looked upon either as an History of things that were done and said; or as a tendry and offer of mercy upon terms and

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conditions which are therein specified and propounded. And accordingly he that believes to Salvation does not only assent to what is therein revealed and made known, but also consent to embrace the mercy that is there offered upon those terms upon which it is propounded. For a man may believe what is revealed to be true and to have come from God, and yet refuse to give up himself to the obedience of those precepts and rules which are there enjoined him in order to his eternal Salvation. The holy Scriptures require of us such a belief as is accompanied with obedience. And when it commands us the belief of the Gospel, it requires that we should shew by our actions that we do believe it. That is, that we should so behave our selves as we do in other things which we do believe, and how we do in other things it is easie to observe. If men do upon rational grounds believe that they may attain their ends, be it riches or honour, &c. by using such or such a method and course, they do diligently set themselves to work that they may accomplish their designs. Nay a very small assurance will set men to work in these cases. The Merchant out of the uncertain hope of wealth will venture himself, and what he hath, upon a rough and a doubtful Sea. The Ambitious man of wars, for the hope of a victory and a triumph, will adventure his life upon the chance of battel. The Husbandman that believes he shall fill his Barns and Coffers by his labour, and pains,

will rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness. He will spare nor cost nor pains; he will not be dismayed with the burden of the Summers heat, nor the keenness of the Winters cold; he will do and he will suffer, no pains or care are thought too much that he may obtain his end. Men do this when they have no assurance of success, and when the thing which they aim at is not worth their while. Yet these pains they take because they believe their success is possible, and that their labour may not be lost. If men did believe the Gospel at this rate what would they not do that they might lay hold of eternal life? Here's a sure word of promise, and here's a great promise too; here's all the encouragement that can be imagined; here's eternal life before us, that unspeakable gift; and the greatest assurance of it upon the terms offered; God himself who cannot lie or repent, hath promised; if we did believe this as much as we do other things (which we have not such reason to believe) we should not be idle and lazy, but we should give all diligence, we should always abound in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour would not be in vain in the Lord. Certainly thus it would be with us if our faith were as it should be, if it were genuine and of the right stamp. But if we sit still and be unconcerned in the great affair of our Souls; if we be lazy, and without devotion, we may indeed boast of a
faith,

faith but it is a dead faith; and we may please our selves with a good opinion of our estate, but sure it is we are not risen with Christ, but we are dead in our trespasses and sins.

Then we do indeed savingly believe the Gospel when this belief of it begets in us a good life. Unless it have this effect upon us we are infidels and unbelievers. For we cannot think our selves better than the Heathens for our faith, if our works be not better than theirs. If we know these things and do not do them we are worse than they who know them not. He believes as he should do that lives as he does believe. The Gospel tells us that *without holiness no man shall see God*, Heb. 12. 14. Who can imagine that the man believes this, who does confidently expect to go to Heaven, and yet takes no care to purge and cleanse his heart. He that believes it as he ought endeavours to be holy as God is holy. Again, the Gospel tells us that we must *not swear at all*, Mat. 5. 34. Nay more than that, that we shall *give an account at the day of judgment for every idle word we speak*, Mat. 12. 36. Now certain it is that there are many who swear in their ordinary conversation, and others also who forswear themselves, and whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. And who can think that such men as these are, do believe the Gospel as they should do? He believes aright who does practise those precepts which he professes the belief of. He that does not that

is an unbeliever. He may *profess that he knows God but in works he denies him*, Tit. 1. 16. and they that do so the Apostle reckons among the *unbelieving*, v. 15. Our Saviour tells us

that *he that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life*, i. e. he that obeyeth the Son; for he presently adds he *that believeth not the*

Son, or he that obeyeth not the Son (as those words may well be rendred) *shall not see life*, Joh. 3. 36. And when the Apostle tells us that God swears to some that they should not enter into his rest, he adds that it was to them *who believed not*; so we render the words, but

they might be rendred, *to them who obeyed not*. And then he presently infers, *we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief*, Heb.

3. 18, 19.

To believe on the name of Christ is to receive him, Joh. 1. 12. But if we receive him, as we should, we must receive him and acknowledg him in all his Offices, as our Prophet, Priest and King. That is, we must believe the truth of his Doctrine as he is our great Prophet, and that teacher who came from God; and then we must obey his Precepts as he is our Lord and our King; as well as expect pardon from him as he is our Priest, and our Atonement. We must receive him as he is offered to us in the Gospel, and not only confidently expect our pardon from him; but

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Of a true and lively Faith.

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we must receive him as God hath sent him, and *God hath sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities*, Act. 3. 26. Now that it is such a Faith in Christ, as I have been speaking of, which the Scriptures require of us in order to our eternal Salvation, will appear,

1. If we consider the great end of the manifestation of Jesus Christ, or the great purpose for which he was sent into the world. Now we must not think that Christ came into the world, and did and suffered those great things which we read of him, only to procure our pardon and indemnity ; we must not think that the only end of all this was that we might be delivered from the evil effects and bad consequents of our sins ; he would be certainly a welcome Saviour to the worst of mankind upon this score. For provided *we may enjoy our sins*, we are content that he should *suffer for them*. We are very willing that he should *bear the blame*, provided we may but have the liberty to *commit the fault*. Though we love our sins well yet are we not fond of the sorrows which they bring with them. We are willing enough that Christ should pay our scores ; and well pleased to live in our sins, and take it kindly that Christ would die for them. But certain it is that Christ appeared and suffered for us too that he might deliver us from the power and dominion as well as from the guilt of our sins.

He did not die for sin that we might live in it, He never came to discharge us from our duty; we think unworthily of our Saviour, and of our Religion if we think thus. He came to plant the divine life in our hearts, to make us better and more like unto God. Let the holy Scriptures speak in this matter. His name is called *Jesus*, because he *should save his people from their sins*, Mat. 1. 21. It is ridiculous to say that by sins is meant no more than the punishment of them, Nor can we think that Christ came into the world for no other end. He would then have taken away the effect and left the cause remaining: This would be to remove the less evil and to let the greater continue; as if a Physician should only project how to remove or abate the symptom, and take no care to suppress the disease, and remove the morbidick matter which is the cause of it. Certainly we think meanly of our Saviours design if we think this was all his business in the world. He came to save us from our sins, and they are a greater evil sure than the effects of them. This is a nobler conquest than to deliver us from death. And this sure was the great purpose of our blessed Saviour. When God promised the Messiah, no less blessing was contained in that promise than this, *that we might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life*, Luk. 1. 74, 75. The Apostle certainly understood the great end for which Christ

Christ appeared : He tells us that for *this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil*, 1 Joh. 3. 8. And that this was one great end why our Lord laid down his life no man can deny that gives any credit to the holy Scriptures. There we are told that *he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works*, Tit. 2. 14. Again it is said that, *he gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world*, Gal. 1. 4. And, *that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again*, 2 Cor. 5. 15. He died for his Church indeed, but then *he gave himself for it ; that he might sanctifie and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish*, Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27. The same Apostle tells his Colossians that Christ hath reconciled them, *in the body of his flesh through death, to present them holy and unblamable, and unreprouable in his sight*, Col. 1. 21, 22. Besides what hath been said we are from the death of Christ exhorted to an holy life, 1 Pet. 4. 1, 2. Rom. 6. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. Which certainly we could not so effectually have been, had our Saviour only dyed for our Indemnity, and to procure our pardon. But since he died for sin, that we might not

live in it, well may we from his death be exhorted to an holy life and conversation. Which if we do not lead we do then frustrate and make void the great end and purpose for which our Lord was sent into the world. Now this makes it evident that where there is a saving Faith in Christ it is accompanied with an holy life : And that we do but pretend to be believers of the Gospel if we do not obey its precepts and perform those conditions which it doth require at our hands. For we then do believe the Gospel, when we believe all the parts of it. Now certain it is that the Gospel does not only bring us the tydings of pardon but it makes known the conditions upon which this grace and favour is offered. And it will avail us nothing that we accept the pardon, if we do refuse the condition upon which it is offered unto us ; for this is but to believe the Gospel in part, and to be but almost Christians. The Gospel does not only contain an History of what was said and done, and suffered by our Lord ; but also promises, precepts, and threats ; and he does fully believe this Gospel, who not only believes the truth of what is there related, but obeys its precepts, submits to the condition of its promises, and reveres its threats. We do easily believe that Christ died for our sins, but this is but part of what the Gospel tells us : We must also believe that therefore we are not to live in them : And that he did not only die

to redeem us from wrath but from our vain
 conversations also. We believ that Christ is our
 Atonement : 'Tis well, but then we must be-
 lieve that he is our Law-giver, and our Lord ;
 and must own him for our King as well as for
 our Priest. And if we believe that he died for
 this end that he might be our propitiation, and
 our ransom, we must also believe that *to this
 end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that
 he might be Lord both of the dead and living,*
 Rom. 14. 9. And certainly if we think it an
 act of Faith to acknowledg him for our
 Priest, and consequently to rest upon him for
 our Salvation ; we must needs think it an act
 of Faith to acknowledg him for our King and
 Lord, and consequently to obey his com-
 mands. And unless we do obey him we do
 but mock him when we call him Lord : *Why
 call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which
 I say ?* Luk. 6. 46. If Christ be our Redeem-
 er he is our Lord too ; and if he came to
 procure our pardon, he also came to amend
 our hearts and lives for the time to come. And
 methinks the words of *St. Peter* are very plain,
 and yet very Emphatical also to the purpose
 in hand : He tells the *Jews* that God had ex-
 alted *Jesus with his right hand*, and for what
 end he had exalted him he adds in the next
 words, to be a *Prince and a Saviour, for to
 give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins,*
 Act. 5. 31. So that if we believe him to be
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our *Saviour*, yet we must believe him to be our *Prince*, and when we hope for *forgiveness* of *sins*, we must be first endued with *repentance* in order to it. Our *Saviour* he is, but then he is our *Lord* first. He is the *author* of *eternal salvation*; but to whom is he so? *it is to them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 9. He came to save sinners; 'tis true, but he came to save them from their sins. They must be divorced from their sins or else may not expect to be saved. He was not obedient that we might have leave to rebell; he did not suffer for sin, that we might live in it without control. He did not do his *Fathers* will that we might do our own. He did not come only to dispossess the Devil out of Temples and Oracles, or the bodies of men, but to drive him also out of mens hearts and lives. He came to set us at liberty from our sins, and from the evil effects of them. And we may not think we have gained the end of our *Saviours* being manifested, till we are set free from the slavery of our sins. And that Faith which lets us spare our sins, and suffers us to live in a contradiction to the commands of Christ, will never save our Souls.

2. This will farther appear to be a great truth, that a true and saving Faith is productive of a good life, and that the Gospel does not require a less Faith than this if we do consider the *faith* of *Abraham*, who is the Father of the Faithful: His Faith is much spoken of
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in the New Testament, and seems to be set there as the pattern of our Faith. And therefore it will be worth our while to consider what kind of Faith that is, which the holy Scriptures take so great notice of *Abraham* for. Now there are two things very remarkable in this Faith of *Abraham*.

1. That he did believe that God would make good his promise which he had made to him. And this he did firmly believe notwithstanding the great unlikelihood of the thing promised, had he consulted with flesh and blood. He had a great assurance that God would make his word good unto him, though it seemed to contradict the ordinary course of nature, and the common reasonings of Mankind. He knew not how the thing could come to pass, but yet he judged him faithful and able to do it, who had made the promise to him. *Being not weak in faith he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform, Rom. 4. 19, 20, 21.* Thus did *Abraham* against hope, believe in hope, v. 18. He could have no natural hopes that this promise should be verified, but yet he believed it would, because God had made the promise; upon this it is that he rests and stays himself. He does
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not dispute either Gods Veracity or Power. Now then our Faith is like that of *Abraham*, when we do believe, what God hath revealed and promised, though the thing revealed should in it self seem very mysterious and strange to our reason, and the thing promised very unlikely in it self to come to pass. We ought to believ that which God says; for his revealing of it makes it *evidently credible* though the thing it self be not in it self *evidently true*. We have sufficient reason to believe, when yet this reason does not stand upon the evidence of the thing but upon the veracity of him who makes it known to us. Then we do believe as *Abraham* did, when we acquiesce in Gods Veracity and Power. He that hath a true Faith does believe what God hath revealed, and doubts not but God will make his promise good. He does intirely trust in God in whom he hath believed: And he will neither reject an article of Faith because his reason cannot comprehend it, nor yet will he distrust Gods All-sufficiency and Veracity when he is in straits and difficulties. He that believes as he should when trouble comes, is not dismayd; for his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord. He well knows that God is faithful, and therefore he quiets himself when the greatest storms arise.

2. *Abraham* did yield himself obedient to Gods commands also, how cross soever they were to flesh and blood. And his doing that was

was an act of that Faith which he is celebrated for in the Holy Scriptures. When God commands him to leave his Country, his kindred and his Fathers house, *Gen. 12. 1.* He readily departs, *v. 4.* And obeys God who had commanded him though the thing it self were so very difficult. For 'tis no easie thing at such an age to leave ones Country, our kindred and fathers house, and go to a Land which we know not of. But this *Abraham* did, and it was an act of his Faith also. *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out not knowing whether he went, Heb. 11. 8.* Again, when God had given him a Son, a Son of all his hopes, and of his old age, a Son whom he loved, and his only Son too, a Son of the promise, and of the free Woman; yet when God who gave him requires him of him, he is not only willing to part with him but with his own hands to sacrifice him where God appoints him, *Gen. 22.* And this was an act of his Faith also, for so we read: *By faith Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that received the promises, offered up his only begotten Son; of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called, Heb. 11. 17, 18.* Such a Faith had this Father of the Faithful; and such a Faith as this must we have also if we would be the Children of *Abraham*. He hath the Faith of *Abraham*, and he only that doth his works.

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If our Faith be saving we shall yield our selves obedient to all the Laws of God. Nothing will be so dear to us as the words of Gods mouth. We shall part with every thing quietly which God commands away from us. We shall obey his Precepts as well as believe his Promises if our Faith be of the right stamp. We shall be at Gods dispose if we be such Believers as we ought to be. And our great care will be this that we resign up our will to the will of God. We do but pretend to Faith if we be void of good works. And then we may only be thought to be the Children of *Abraham* when we do his works. *Abraham* shewed his faith by his works, and so must we do also. *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also*, Jam.2.26.

3. It will farther appear that a saving Faith is productive of a good life if we do but diligently consider what great things the Holy Scriptures speak of Faith. For it is greatly magnified in the holy writ, and such things are said of it as do greatly advance it above that lazy and ineffectual faith which we please our selves with. Very many and very excellent things are said to have been done by Faith, *Heb.11*. This made the Sacrifice of *Abel* more excellent in Gods sight than that of *Cain*. 'Twas by Faith that *Enoch* pleased God, and was translated: This puts *Noah* upon making the Ark in which a remnant of the World were saved. By Faith *Moses* contemns the riches
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and pleasures of the *Egyptian* Court, and rather chuses to suffer affliction with Gods people. This carried the *Israelites* through the Red Sea, this threw down the Walls of *Jericho* and saved *Rahab* from that common destruction. Faith subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the mouths of Lions, overcame fire and sword, made weakness strong, turned armies to flight. This put courage and resolution into the weak, and prevailed against that which did oppose it. Great are the works which a true and saving Faith hath done. It enables both to do and suffer for the name of Christ. It enables us to perform the hardest tasks of Religion: It will enable us to forgive our offending brother, *Luk.* 17. 5. And to cleanse our hearts of our filthiness, *Act.* 15. 9. Aye, and besides all this the Apostle tells us, that *this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith*, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. And when the Apostle exhorts us to put on the whole armour of God, he bids us, *above all to take the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*, *Ephes.* 6. 16. So that it is the great engine against the Devil, the world, and the flesh. It vanquishes our Spiritual enemies, and triumphs over them. It works miraculously where it is. It subdues our lusts, and enables us to conquer our greatest enemies. And certainly then, the
Faith

Faith which the Scriptures speak thus greatly of is not a sluggish and lazy Faith, but it does produce in us a great change of heart and life.

Our Saviour tells his Disciples that if they had *faith as a grain of mustard-seed*, they might say to a mountain remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing should be impossible unto them, Mat. 17. 20. It is true indeed the first Preachers of the Gospel had the power of doing Miracles bestowed upon them; such a faith had they but we have it not: But yet we have a Faith still, if we be the genuine followers of Christ, that does enable us to do works that are miraculous also, though not in the same kind with theirs. Indeed they had power to do great Miracles and wonderful works in the world for the confirming that Gospel which was but newly planted among men. This power is now ceased with the reason of it. But yet a true Faith does very mighty works, and such as are as pleasing to God, and of themselves more advantageous

vid. Chrysost.
vol. 5. p. 274.
Edit. Savil.

to us than that power of working Miracles would have been. They cast out Devils, and could easily dispossess them from the *bodies* of men; but then our Faith enables us to cast him out of our *hearts*: They cured *diseases* that were *bodily*, our Faith *cleanses* our *Souls*. They could *raise* the *dead*, our Faith raises us from the *death* of *sin* to the life of Righteousness.

ness. They could heal Lepers, give sight to the Blind, restore the Lame, and destroy the obstinate offenders. Our saving Faith cures our leprosie of Sin, opens our blind eyes, enables us to walk in Gods ways, and throws down the obstacles that lie in our way. What was done by the first Preachers of the Gospel is done daily by every sincere Christian. If they destroyed the Devil, so does he. They turn'd him out of his Temples, he out of his heart. The works of Faith now are as momentous as that of Miracles: He that overcomes the world, and vanquishes his lusts, he that despises riches and conquers himself, does works as pleasing to God, and as profitable to himself, as he that removed Mountains and cast them into the Sea. Nay such works as these are better for us, and more acceptable to God than the power of doing the greatest Miracles. He that lives well does more than he that wrought Miracles. It was not the power of doing Wonders that made men Christians. Their Christianity did consist in the obedience of their lives. He that obeys the Gospel (and our Faith teacheth us to do so) receives the grace and mercy which it offers. If we could do wonders and yet remained void of the love and image of God we would not be in the state of Salvation. The lives of the Apostles made them dear to God, and not their miracles. And *St. Luke* when he writes the story of what the Apostles did, does

not give his Book the title of the *Miracles of the Apostles*, but the *Acts* or *Practices* of the Apostles is the title which it bears. Our Saviour bids the Disciples *not to rejoyce that the spirits are subject to them; but rather, says he, rejoyce because your names are written in heaven, Luk. 10. 20.* Our obedience does intitle us to Gods favour, but so does not our power to do wonderful works. If we work iniquity it is not the gift of working Miracles that shall stand us in stead. *Many, says Christ, will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have not we prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity, Mat. 7. 22, 23.* That Faith which wrought Miracles endured but for a time, but the Faith which works righteousness is to abide for ever. If our Faith cleanse and purifie our hearts we shall not need be troubled that it does not remove Mountains. If we be condemned at that great day, it shall not be because we did not work Miracles, but because we did not feed the hungred, and cloth the naked, &c. *Mat. 25. Jam. 2. 15, 16.* 'Tis our sincere obedience to the Gospel which God requires and will reward hereafter. We must shew our Faith by our works as *Abraham* did, or else we shall have no reason to judg Faith saving. If it be such a Faith as cleanseth our hearts, if it enable us to forgive our enemies,

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if it help us to overcome the world; if it make us strong against temptations, patient under afflictions, constant under trials, and careful to obey God, then it is such a Faith as God requires of us. But if on the other hand it be but a lazy belief of the truth of the Gospel, and a confident expectation however of grace and pardon, it is not such a Faith as will save our Souls: And let us never so much vaunt our selves that we magnifie the free Grace of God, when we profess a recumbency upon Christ, and a resting upon him for Salvation; yet if we remain idle and disobedient this Faith will not avail us. He does savingly believe that does assent to the truth of what God hath revealed, and is so far in love with it also that he does sincerely and heartily give himself up to the obedience of it. And he that does this as he ought, is so far from depreſſing the freeneſs of Gods Grace, and exalting himself, that when he hath done all that he can, and which is commanded, he can say from the bottom of his heart that he is an unprofitable servant, and hath done that which was his duty to do, *Luk.*
17. 10.

CHAP. IX.

But as we must examine our *faith* towards God, so we must try our *love* towards one another. For the Eucharist is a *feast* of love, and a *Sacrament* of charity. And was not only designed for our renewing our most solemn Covenant with God, but also for the maintaining a fervent Charity with one another, as hath been shewed before. Now as we are too forward to profess a Faith which we have not, so it is to be feared, we do commonly profess a Charity when we are devoid of it. And therefore it will very highly concern us to enquire diligently whether or no we have a fervent Charity and Love to one another. For the Holy Scriptures commend to us a *Love without dissimulation*, Rom. 12. 9. a Love that is *fervent* and *with a pure heart*, 1 Pet. 1. 22. A Love which does not lie in *word* and in *tongue*, but in *deed* and in *truth*, 1 Joh. 3. 18. Now though we do make pretences of Love to one another, yet it is much to be feared that we do frequently but pretend it, and that under this great pretence of kindness there does frequently lurk a secret root of bitterness. Now notwithstanding Charity be a most extensive Grace, yet I shall consider it at this time as it does import these two things.

First, a readiness to do our Neighbour good.

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Secondly, to forgive evil : For where there is a true Love we shall be ready to *give*, and *forgive* ; to do all the good we can, and forgive all the evil which is done against us. These two will make our Love to one another like the Love of God to us, who does not only forgive our offences, but does also load us daily with his benefits.

First, we shall be ready to do our Neighbour all the good we can if we do love him as we should. And if we would make a right judgment of the sincerity of this Love which we bear our Neighbour, we must judge of it by that Love which we bear our selves; for we are strictly obliged to *Love our neighbour as we love our selves*, Mat.22.39. Now before we can be said to do this we must,

(1) With our Neighbour the same good which we wish to our selves : We must have the same sincere affection to our Neighbour which we have to our selves. This must be the standard by which we are to measure our Love. And as it is very easie to discern that we do very sincerely wish well to our selves, so must we do by our Neighbour also before we can be said to love him as we love our selves. And this must be understood in the greatest latitude. Certain it is that we wish well in the general to our own Souls, to our Bodies, our Credit and Estate, though we many times use not the means which tend to their welfare; we must do thus as sincerely

by our Neighbour also. And,

(2) We must in all our actions do by him as we in the like case should, or may reasonably desire that he should do by us. This we must inviolably observe before we can be said to love our Neighbour as we do love our selves. And it is a very plain case that we would not that our Neighbour should invade our just rights, and therefore if we love him as we love our selves we shall be as careful not to invade his. If we are in misery or want, we shall be glad of our Neighbours compassion and relief; and when we love him as our selves we shall as readily afford him ours. We shall be very ready to preserve our Neighbours credit, to put a fair interpretation upon his actions, to relieve his wants, to bewail his misery, to farther the Eternal welfare of his Soul, if we do love him as our selves. And indeed it will not avail us that we do pretend to love our Neighbour if we do not help him and do him good. *If a brother or Sister be naked and destitute of daily food; and one of you say unto them, depart in peace; be you warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?* Jam. 2. 15, 16. Certainly we are devoid of Love to our Neighbour if we do him not good as we have an opportunity. *Whoso hath this worlds good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth he*

the love of God in him 1 Joh.3.17. If we love our Neighbour we shall most readily do him good, and we shall always stand ready to do good offices to all with whom we shall converse. And,

Secondly, we must forgive the evil which our Neighbour does to us. This we must also heartily do before we can worthily partake of this holy Sacrament. And I shall shew (1) what it is to forgive, and (2) what great reason we have to do it when we partake of this Sacrament.

First, what it is to forgive, or what kind of forgiveness the Gospel requires of us; and of this I shall speak, 1 Negatively; 2 Positively.

Negatively.

1. Forgiveness implies more than a bare profession of kindness: This is a very common thing, and may well be supposed to take place amongst those that yet remain very great enemies: It is common to make great protestations of an hearty reconciliation. Our Saviour requires that we forgive one another *from our hearts*, Mat.18.35.

2. Forgiveness implies more than a bare abstaining from making spiteful returns: There may be a *secret malice* where there is no *visible injury* done: We are obliged to love our enemy, 'tis not enough that we do him no harm.

3. Forgiveness implies more than doing kindnesses to our brother. It does indeed re-

quire a readiness to do this, but yet the doing kindneses to our enemy is no certain argument that we have forgiven him. We may be bountiful and liberal and yet devoid of Charity, 1 Cor. 13. 1. We may *give*, and yet not *forgive*. And perhaps we may do our enemy a kindness out of pride and vain-glory, or else we triumph over his misery, and rejoyce that he who was before the object of our *envy* is now become the object of our *pity*.

Positively.

1. He that forgives a right does it universally. That is, he forgives every man, and every trespass, and at every time. We easily forgive little offenders, and the smaller faults of our Neighbour: But the sincere Christian does more than this; he forgives not only a professed enemy, but a treacherous and false friend; not only him that despises him but the most cursing *Shimei* that reproaches him to the face. His Charity *beareth all things*, 1 Cor. 13. 7.

2. He is so far from taking revenge that his mind is free from all the intention of it. The leaven of malice is quite purged out of his heart; he is so far from watching an opportunity of mischief that he desires it not. And so far from doing evil that such is his Charity, *he thinketh no evil*, 1 Cor. 13. 5.

3. He does heartily pity his enemy and pray for him: And in this is a follower of the precept and of the example of his Blessed Saviour,

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our, *Mat. 5. 44. Luk. 23. 34.* He does not only not requite his enemies with evil but he returns him good ; *As for me when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth ; I humbled my Soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into mine own bosom : I behaved my self as though he had been my friend, or brother : I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his mother,* *Psal. 35. 13, 14.*

4. He does not only forgive but forget. He is most willing to let the remembrance of the injuries he hath received pass away. And as a proof of this, he is most ready to do his enemy a kindness, and that out of no other design at all but a sense of his duty, and a real Love which he finds in himself towards him. He does not do it out of ostentation, nor with a purpose to upbraid him with ingratitude, or enhance his guilt, but meerly because he loves him, and desires his welfare with no less sincerity than he does his own. And still as a farther demonstration that he forgets the injury received, he is most ready to restore his enemy to the same degree of Love which he had before he did the wrong : He is willing to admit him to the same kindness which he enjoyed before ; aye and to the same trust and confidence also upon his Repentance, or the probable indications of it. In one word he does not retain any thing of malice or ill-will, but on the other hand finds in himself a most sincere love and good will, and by all his actions

ons does shew the great sincerity of it.

No less than such a forgiveness does the Gospel require, no less does the true Christian find in himself: And certainly it cannot be any thing short of this: For we must forgive as we desire God to forgive: And sure I am we desire from Heaven no less than such a forgiveness, and must therefore think our selves obliged to do no otherwise by our brother than we would that God should do by us. For in this matter that is the Rule we are to go by, we are to imitate God, to forgive our offending brother, *Even as God for Christs sake hath forgiven us*, Eph. 4.32.

Secondly, I come to shew what great reason we have to forgive our brother when we come to this Sacrament. Now that I shall shew in the following Severals.

1. Because in this Sacrament we keep in remembrance the death of Christ. This was one great end of its Institution, and this does strongly oblige us to forgive our brother: Whether we consider the death of Christ,

(1) In it self, as obliging us to put away all our sins for which he died. It is but reason we should put away our sins which put our Lord to death. And if he died for sin, then ought we by no means to live in it. If we do, we crucifie our Lord afresh, and are more cruel to him than *Judas* or *Pontius Pilate*. We make his pains of no effect, and shew our selves void of all pity to our bleeding Saviour. They were
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our sins that put him to his shame and to his sorrow ; and if we retain them we do but trample upon his precious blood ; we are very wretched Creatures if we maintain his enemies, and add to his sorrows. He did not die for sins that we might live in them but that we might die to them. His Death is a very forcible argument against the life of our lusts, and a great motive to obedience. We little regard our dying Lord if we at once remember his Death and break his Laws.

(2) Again, our Lord at his Death gave us a very great example of forgiveness of enemies ; and therefore when we remember his death, we have very great reason to forgive our offending brother. Our Blessed Lord met with great enemies, and such as had the greatest reason to be his friends. He that eat of his bread lift up his heel against him. He was betrayed by his own Disciple, delivered to death by him that pronounced him innocent, scourged and mocked by a rude and heady multitude. He is numbred among Transgressors who had committed no sin. He was hanged on the tree who had never tasted the forbidden fruit. He was put to death by those whom he came to seek and to save : He had done them many kindnesses whiles he was among them. He healed their sick, fed their hungry, restored their blind, dispossessed their Dæmoniacks, and raised their dead. He offended none of their Laws. He paid *Cæsar* his

his tribute, took care the Priest should have his offering, observed their customs, went to their Festivals, and was so far from profaning their Temple, that he shewed a great zeal for defending it from common uses. There could be nothing said against his Doctrine, nothing against his Life. His enemies that bare witness against him could not agree, and it was infinitely plain that he was innocent: And yet his Countrymen thirst after his blood, and prefer a murderer before him. They want patience when our Lord wanted none: They cry out, *Crucifie him, crucifie him*: And what does our Lord do? he crys out too, but not for vengeance but for mercy, *Father forgive them for they know not what they do*, Luk. 23. 34. Certainly then we should be ashamed to remember these things with malice in our hearts; well may we forgive our enemies when our Lord hath forgiven his. We must not dare to remember the Death of Christ, and to remember our Neighbours unkindness together. We may not think of revenge when our Lord shewed so much mercy. We cannot rightly remember Christs Death when we do not imitate his example. He taught us what we should do by what he did himself. We shall look very unlike our Lord if we retain our malice and ill-will.

(3) If we consider that Christs Death was not only for sins, but also for our sins, we shall still find a greater obligation upon us to forgive

give one another. God gave his Son to die, than which there cannot be a greater miracle of Love, and if God *so loved us, we also ought to love one another*, 1 Joh. 4. 11. It was for us our Saviour laid down his life, and who are we! Had we deserved this love! were we his friends, that he was at this pains and cost! No surely; but we were sinners and enemies, and yet he laid down his Life for us, *Rom. 5. 8, 10*. If then Christ died for *his* enemies, we ought to forgive *ours*; and then especially we are obliged to do it when we pretend to remember the Death of Christ: How can we now pull our brother by the throat for a few *pence*, when our Lord hath forgiven us so many *talents*? We are very ungrateful for our Lords kindness if we are unkind to one another. Did we but consider Gods mercies to us we should think our selves obliged to be merciful to one another: And methinks it should be easie for us to forgive our Neighbour, if we did but consider how very much we need Gods forgiveness, and how far we are from deserving it. If our Lords eye have been so good to us why should ours be evil to one another! what miserable wretches should we be if Gods mercies to us had not been greater than ours is to one another! He hath forgiven us our great scores, let us not retain then our grudges to our brother. For shame then let us purge out this leaven of malice when we keep this Feast. Let us shew our selves kind

to each other when we do remember the kindness of our Blessed Saviour. Besides, our brothers offences against us are small in respect to ours against God. We offend against an infinite Majesty, we transgress the Eternal Laws of Reason. How coldly do we pray to him for the greatest blessings ! How insensible are we of his many mercies ! How very stupid and incorrigible under his severest judgments ! How void of the love of him, who hath loved us so much ! If he should mark iniquities how should we be able to stand ! We are not able to answer for one of a thousand : But yet we hope for mercy upon our Repentance and our Faith : We expect pardon from God for all these amisses : And had we not this hope we should be of all men the most miserable. We have then very great reason to be reconciled to our brother, when we stand in so great need that God should be reconciled unto us ; and when we hope for the pardon of our sins from God, which we do from Christs death, and at this time when we do commemorate it, we have a sufficient motive to forgive our brother. Especially our Saviour having said, *If you forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses,* Mat. 6. 14, 15.

2. Another great end of this Sacrament is that Christians may be knit together in the strictest bond of Love and Charity. It is as I shewed

shewed you before, a Feast of Love : It was designed to bring us together and to make us all of one heart. And a very effectual instrument it is, were it rightly understood and used, to that end and purpose. It would soon make us one again : It would bring together those who now are separated from one another. When Communion was frequent in the Church Christians loved one another, and kept together : But when they became more seldom solemnized, then the feuds among the professors of Christianity grew also : For indeed this Sacrament was intended to maintain us in Love and Charity. And therefore if we do not heartily forgive our brother we do destroy also this end of its Institution. It is very indecent to see men at odds that eat and drink at the same common Table. But it is a great wickedness to come to this holy Table with malice and ill-will to our brother in our hearts. We must not keep this *feast of love*, with the *leaven of malice*. We cannot partake of this Sacrament but we must profess a kindness to our brother ; and if we mean it not we are like *Judas* that gave his Master good words when he was ready to betray him ; and shall be miserable as he was, into whom the Devil and the morsel entered at once. We shall find death here if we do not cleanse our hearts from malice and ill-will. More might be said to shew what reason we have to forgive our brother before we partake of this Sacrament,
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but I shall say no more, only adding the words of our Saviour. *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee; leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift,* Mat. 5. 23, 24.

CHAP. X.

I Should now proceed to ſhew how we are to behave our ſelves when we do Communicate, when we have firſt examined the ſtate and condition of our Souls. But yet before I do proceed to that, becauſe we may ſtand in need of ſome farther ſupplies before we do actually Communicate, I ſhall not omit to add ſomething for our aſſiſtance that way.

1. Perhaps a man after the peruſal of what hath been ſaid before may not be able to determine whether he be fit to receive or not: And in caſe he doubt of himſelf it may be asked what he is to do in that caſe: If he proceed under his doubt he may involve himſelf in a farther perplexity; and if he do not receive, he may fear that he neglects his duty towards God in letting ſlip ſo excellent an opportunity of becoming better, and omitting ſo great a precept of the Goſpel. In this caſe then it is very adviſable that he ſhould make uſe of a Spiritual guide for his farther direction.

tion. This will be his safest course certainly ; and well it would be if this course were taken more frequently than it is. It might prevent many of those miscarriages which men now fall into. It is of great advantage to the Souls of men not to conceal their doubts and scruples. The hiding of them tends to their great trouble, if not many times, to their eternal ruin. God hath provided us with the Ministers of his Word to conduct and guide us in the way to Heaven. This is the great end for which they are sent, and we ought accordingly to make use of them. We do very readily consult the Physician and the Lawyer, where our Lives or Estates are in any danger. And certainly were our Souls as precious to us as our Bodies and our Wealth, we should as readily take advice for them as we do for these. Our way to Heaven would not be so perplexed would we use the means which the mercy of God hath provided for us. Now certain it is that God gave *Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists* ; and *some Pastors and Teachers* ; for the *perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, Ephes. 4. 11, 12.* If we love our Souls we shall do well to shew our utmost care of them ; which we cannot be said to do if we suffer our doubts to remain, and do not use those appointments which God hath so plentifully furnished us withal.

2. We must be careful that when we ex-

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amine our selves, we take accounts of our selves for those amisses which are not punishable by any Laws of men. We are not to absolve and acquit our selves because the severest Laws of Men cannot censure us. We do greatly amiss when yet the best Laws of Men cannot punish us for doing so. We ought to consider how we spend our time, to examine whether we spend it either idly or unprofitably : We are also to enquire how we spend our Estates whether in works of mercy and necessity, or upon vain and gawdy things. We are to remember, that we must hereafter account for every talent which we have received of our Lord : and though we may so live that the best Laws of men cannot condemn us, nor yet the best men justly censure us ; yet however we may be liable to a greater and more impartial Judg. We are at such a time to examine and search into all the secrets of our hearts. We must indeed be favourable in our judgment of others, but it becomes us very severely to judg our selves. And we must not only abstain from evil but from all appearance of it ; not only from things that are in themselves *evil*, but that are of *evil report*. Such things as these are frequenting of Taverns, very gawdy and fantastick attire, great merriments and jollities, costly feasts and entertainments, spending beyond our income and revenue as well as above our rank : Spending great portions of our time in Drollery
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and mirth, setting off our beauty with artifice and curiosity ; an extraordinary niceness in our dress, and a great forwardness in following the mode and fashion. Such things as these are must come under our Examination, for it is very much to be feared that in them we do transgress, and that our hearts may go astray from God. Indeed we are by no means to condemn one another ; we may not too hastily judg our brother in this case ; but yet it will well become us to examine our own hearts, and to be very jealous and suspicious of our selves.

3. In making a Judgment of our selves we ought not only to consider what we are when we are dress'd up for the Solemnity, but what we are in our ordinary conversation. There are few men so profane, but they will put on a demure countenance, and a fair outside when they are going to the Table of the Lord : But we are not to measure our selves by that, but to consider what we are at other times. The best way to judg of our selves is to do it by what we are in our ordinary conversation. There is a Mechanical Religion, and that is, when our devotion is raised by the ringing of a Bell, the return of a Solemnity, or else the menaces of death ; but when these things are over we return to our old wants, and are but what we were before. When a Sacrament draws nigh we look like Saints, we abstain from our grosser sins, we put up some cold

prayers to God, we are for a day or two before very reserved and sober, and we fast it may be upon the vespers of the Festival, and carry our selves very reverently when we do communicate : But yet all this while our hearts are not changed, and our lives are the same, or worse than they were before. And therefore we are not to judg of our selves by such fits and pangs of devotion, but by the general course and tenor of our lives. Were we to chuse the picture of a friend or wife (that I may use a Simile of one of our Divines upon this argument) if we would have a true picture we would have it drawn as she uses to look in the ordinary management of her huswifery, not as she looked when she was dressed up with all the advantages and tricks of Art. We must do so by our selves, let us (if we would take a just estimate) reflect what we ordinarily are. The worst of men at some times seem to be very good. There are but few men so stupid but something or other does awaken them to a sense of things, and yet these men remain very bad and senseless still. We call that man a lunatick or mad-man who yet hath many lucid intervals when he can use his reason : And him we judg a Fool or Natural (as we call them) who is generally so in all his words and actions, though sometimes he may speak good sense, and make very smart replies upon us. A Fever retains its name though it do sometimes intermit and be not

not one continual paroxysm. There must be a great change in the blood before it be quite removed. 'Tis so in the case that is before us; there must not only be an intermission of our sins and sinful affections, but an extinction of them before we can be said to be new Creatures. And that we are which we are most generally in the course of our conversations.

4. It is therefore advisable that before we do Communicate we make some experiments upon our selves. Let us try how we can resist a temptation, and how we can overcome it. Let us inure our selves by degrees to overcome our inordinate affections. Suppose that we are given to some excess of anger or intemperance or the like: Let us try our selves sometime before how we can master our selves. And it will not be hard to do it if we do it gradually, and always call in to our assistance the Divine aid. If we be given to anger and impatience, let us try first how we can bear the evils and disappointments of a day; which it will be no hard matter to do. Then let us take out a greater time and use our selves by degrees to bear the yoke. If we find that we get the mastery then may we expect a very great aid by communicating, as well as a great encouragement to communicate frequently. The *Jews* were commanded to keep the day of expiation, then they were to afflict their Souls, and thought themselves obliged to

*Toma c. 8.
Mishn. 4.
cum notis
Bartenor.*

fast; but yet they tell us that they did not with-hold meat and drink from little Children all at once, but they did by degrees wont them to the observation of that solemnity; so that the child that was wont to eat at the fourth hour received his meat at the fift or sixt, according to his strength, and thus they did use them for a year or two before they took upon them the observation of this and the other precepts. And this course we shall do well to take with our Souls: We may do well by degrees to wont them to obedience; and not to venture upon Communicating (whereby we are most solemnly obliged to obey all the precepts of Christ) before we have had some proof of our obedience.

5. It is also very advisable that at this time we do more particularly design the destroying that lust which does most constantly annoy us, and easily beset us. We have our peculiar lusts and follies to which we are addicted: Some sins there are that are frequent temptations to us and do greatly molest and trouble us. It will be wisdom at this time to set our selves mainly against that sin. Where we are weakest we shall do well to set the strongest guard and watch. Our bodies are not more naturally prone to their peculiar distempers than our Souls are to their particular follies. And certainly if we can destroy these fiercer enemies we shall not need fear the other assailants. And therefore let us especially set our selves

selves against those lusts that do very often sollicite and importune us. For as it is great wisdom to consider where we are weak and easily overcome, so is it no less wisdom to raise up all our force and strength to defend our selves against those spiritual enemies which do most easily prevail upon us.

6. Let us endeavour to put our selves into such a preparation as we would be found in when we are to die. For certainly we are not fit to Communicate if we are not fit to die. The same Preparation is required for a Communion which is for our death. And many devout persons have very wisely at once disposed themselves for the receiving this Sacrament and their dissolution also. Now certain it is that though we trifle in our lives yet we become serious when we come to die. Then we do recollect our selves, and very severely examine our own Consciences. Then we pray very earnestly, give very earnest attention to Gods word, and very seriously heed what we are about. And did we as verily believe that we should forthwith resign up our Souls unto God, we should be very careful to put them in a readiness for so great a change. It will well become us at this time to consider in what condition we would be found when our Lord calls us hence; and then to endeavour to our utmost that we may with no less diligence dispose our selves for this service than if we were presently to give up the Ghost. Thus

if we do we shall not trifle in our Preparations, but shall most carefully examine our hearts, and most earnestly call in the Divine aid and assistance.

CHAP. XI.

I Proceed now to shew how we are to behave our selves when we do Communicate: And of that I shall speak in the following Severals.

I. First of all, we are to take care that our *hearts be lifted up to the Lord*, as we are exhorted by the man of God. Let us not suffer our thoughts to remain upon low and earthly things. Forget your worldly concerns and interests. Remember what an holy and solemn service you are about. Attend now upon this very thing. When your worldly and trifling thoughts would thrust in upon you presently repell and beat them back. Tell them you are employed about greater matters, that they must stand off now while you worship your Lord; that your Souls are the houses of prayer, and not a den of such thieves. Suffer not these busie intruders to have any entrance or countenance from you. By no means yield to any of their importunities. Your Souls must ascend up to Heaven now, and forget all earthly things. Your otherwise lawful thoughts you must now account profane. They must
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by no means come near when you are thus employed. We must do now as was done at the giving of the Law, bounds were set that nothing might approach the Mount under the severest penalty, *Exod. 19*. We must do so now we make this solemn approach unto God; we must be greatly careful that no evil or earthly thought draw nigh, and if they do we must severely chastise them and beat them back. And as then 'twas forbidden to suffer either man or beast to touch that Mount, so we must here beware not only of our beastly and carnal thoughts, but also of all other thoughts (though at another time not unbecoming man-kind) which would disturb our devotion, and draw us aside from the contemplation of what we are about. We had need use our utmost care that we may attend upon God without distraction; else will our hearts before we are aware slide into vain or impertinent entertainments. And when they are once let loose we shall not so very easily recollect them and bring them back. They will soon run into the ends of the earth, and if we be not watchful and resolute, they will leave nothing but our bodies for so great a service as this: Our hearts are treacherous, and our thoughts are like the servant of the Prophet who secretly run after the *Syrian* for a talent of Silver, and two changes of raiment, without the leave of his master; and if we call them not in they'll contract a more dismall leprosie than

than that servant did. We cannot let them *gad* abroad without a great loss at such a time as this. We may be assured they will fare as *Dinah* did, they will return defiled home. And therefore let us be sure to set a strict watch upon our selves, lest our spiritual enemies steal away our hearts at such a time as this. Let us lift them up to God, and there let them be kept whiles we worship his holy name.

2. When you approach to the Table of the Lord, endeavour to raise up your heart to the greatest thankfulness to Almighty God for his undeserved love to thee. O consider how gracious thy Lord is unto thee a wretched sinner : That he should not only give thee his Son to die, but also give thee his flesh to eat. Not only receive thee to pardon but also entertain thee at his own Table as his guest and friend. Say within thy self, " Lord, what am
 " I, that thou shouldest not only shew me
 " pity, but do me so great a favour to receive
 " me as thy friend. What a love is this that
 " thou art pleased to shew to my Soul, when
 " there are so many that have not heard of
 " these thy mercies, so many that have fore-
 " gone them. I may well wonder that thy
 " mercy lets me live, that I have bread to eat,
 " or thy air to breath in ; and yet thou art
 " pleased to give me Angels food, and to feed
 " me with bread from Heaven. I am not
 " worthy of the least of thy mercies, but then
 " this miracle of love may well overwhelm
 " me,

“me. Who has ever heard of such a love, of
“so great a condescension ! Bless the Lord, O
“my Soul, and all that is within me bless his
“holy name : Let me never forget so great a
“mercy, never be ungrateful after such a con-
“descension of Heaven. What shall I render
“unto the Lord for such an unspeakable love
“as this, that he should spread me a Table,
“and fill my Cup, who am unworthy of the
“crumbs that fall from his Table. Oh the
“height and depth, the length and breadth
“of this love which passeth knowledge !

It well becomes us thus to raise up our hearts to all thankfulness to God when we do approach to this Feast. For we do here commemorate the greatest mercy that was ever shewed to Mankind. And it requires of us the greatest praise and thanksgiving. This is a service of praise ; and therefore it is called the Eucharist. And certainly if we think our selves obliged to commemorate our benefactors and friends, which we frequently do ; we must think our selves much more obliged with all thankfulness to remember the love of our dearest Lord who died that we might live.

3. When we see the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out, let us meditate at once upon the Passion of our Lord, and the hainous nature of our sins that put him to that pain. Think you saw your dearest Saviour hang upon the Cross, that you were eye-witnesses of
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the shame and sorrow that he underwent. O think you saw the blood that he shed running down his Body ; that you saw the Spear and the Nails that pierced his Hands, his Feet and Side. Call to mind the Agony that he was in, the sorrows that he underwent : Have some pity and regard to thy bleeding Lord ; pass not by but see and behold that there is no sorrow like to his sorrow. Thy heart is very hard sure if thou dost not now relent. Thou art very devoid of pity if thou hast no compassion for thy bleeding Lord. But then remember what it was that brought upon him all this sorrow and shame that thou seest him in. Not any fault of his own but thy sins were the cause of it. They nailed him to his Cross, they pierced his side, they crowned him with thorns, and gave him gall and vinegar to drink, they did him the despight and the affronts which he endured. They were the *Judas*, the *Pilate*, the false witnesses, the chief Priests that contrived and accomplished his sorrows. 'Twas thy Covetousness that betrayed him, thy unbelief and wickedness that brought him to his Cross, and caused him to cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?* Raise up then a great indignation against thy sins, as thou hast any love or pity for thy dying Lord. Say thus to thine own heart : " Shall I not be ashamed of those sins
" which put my Lord to so much shame ! shall
" I not mourn for those sins which put him to
" so

“so much pain! may not they well break my
“heart which have so deeply wounded and
“pierced my blessed Saviour! If he died for
“sin well may I be ashamed to live in it. If
“my sins made him cry out and bow the
“head, how shall I then give them any enter-
“tainment! Well may they be heavy on me
“which were so great a burden to my Lord.
“How have I made a sport of that (vile
“wretch as I am) which made my Saviour
“sweat drops of blood! Did my Saviour suf-
“fer such pains that he might destroy sin, and
“have not I harboured it? I have taken part
“with the most implacable enemies of my dy-
“ing Lord. Alas, I have not considered the
“sorrows of my Saviour, but like a vile
“wretch, I have crucified him afresh, I have
“trampled on his blood, and done him open
“despight and shame. Methinks I see him
“hang on the Cross, and methinks I hear him
“cry out to me, and bid me see whether there
“were ever such a sorrow, and also, that I
“should not be ungrateful to forget his love.
“What an hard heart have I had that have
“had no more regard to him! Oh, that mine
“eyes were a fountain of tears, that I might
“mourn for my sins that have crucified my
“Lord. Sure my heart is very hard if I do
“not mourn now for mine iniquities, when
“I behold my bleeding and dying Saviour. I
“have tears for other things, have I none for
“my sins, none for my Lord! I have some-
“times

"times wept when I have thought of a dying
 "friend. Have I no tears for my dying Savi-
 "our, who dies that I may live! O my God
 "smite this rocky heart of mine that I may
 "weep when I look upon him whom I have
 "crucified. Look upon me, my Lord, as thou
 "didst once upon thy Disciple who denied
 "thee, that I may be able to weep bitterly as
 "he did.

It will well become us, when we commem-
 orate the death of our Saviour to be very
 deeply humbled for our sins which put him
 to death.

4. When thou receivest the Bread renew
 your Covenant with God. Consent heartily
 to receive thy Saviour in all his Offices, of
 Prophet, Priest, and King. Desire earnestly
 to be joined to thy Lord in the strictest bond.
 Resolve to give thy self up intirely to the obe-
 dience of his holy Laws: Beg of him that he
 would dwell in thine heart; give him the full
 possession of thy self. Tell him thou art his
 for the time to come, and that thou dost will-
 ingly give him entrance and possession of thy
 whole heart. Say to him, "Lord I do hear-
 "rily and joyfully entertain thee. And though
 "I am unworthy that thou shouldest come
 "under my roof; yet since it is thy condescen-
 "sion to visit me a poor sinner, I do most
 "joyfully receive thee. Grant that I, who eat
 "of thy bread, may never lift up my heel a-
 "gainst thee. And that though many Lords
 "have

"have ruled in me, I may henceforth only
"make mention of thy name. Strengthen my
"feeble Soul that I may perform my Vows :
"Help me that I may now be thine, and that I
"may continue in thy love. Be thou that to
"my Soul which bread is to my mortal and
"frail body. Grant that my Soul and Body
"may be separate and for ever set apart to thy
"service ; suffer me not to profane, and un-
"hallow what is thus solemnly consecrated to
"thee. I offer thee my heart ; Lord, unite it to
"thy fear and service. Grant it may no more
"run astray from thee, that it may not be se-
"duced by the deceitfulness of sin, by the al-
"lurements and blandishments of this wicked
"world, but continue constant and stedfast in
"thy Covenant. *Create in me a clean heart, O*
"*God, and renew a right (or constant) spirit*
"*within me, Psal. 51. 10.*

5. When we receive the Cup, let us again renew our consent that Christ shall rule over us. And let us particularly meditate upon the great danger of revolting and sliding back : This is the blood of the new Covenant, the blood of the immaculate Lamb of God which was shed for us. It was an ancient custom of entering into league and covenants by slaying of beasts and shedding their blood ; this was in token that he that failed to perform his part did devote himself to the like destruction. Oh consider then what a wrath hangs over thy head, if thou trample upon the blood of Jesus !

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There will remain nothing. but a *certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.* And therefore consider well, how greatly dangerous it will be for thee to disobey thy Lord for the time to come. Say thus within thy self: "I am now renewing my Covenant
 " with God, I do now undertake to obey the
 " Laws of Christ, and make him a solemn promise of obedience for the time to come. And
 " that I may bind my self the faster to my
 " Lord, I take the Sacrament upon it, I drink
 " of this blood of the new Covenant. So that
 " I am now bound in a stricter bond than
 " ever; I have professed a service to him a
 " great while, I have now listed my self, and
 " as it were taken a Sacramental Oath that I
 " will be faithful. This blood of my Saviour
 " will witness against me if I fall back, and
 " so the blood of Jesus will be upon me if I
 " prove unfaithful. And therefore, O my Lord,
 " look in mercy upon me. Grant that I may
 " not after all my other sins, be guilty of the
 " blood of Christ. That I may never have the
 " blood of my Saviour to answer for. Then
 " will my case be worse than that of the *Jews*
 " who crucified him, but yet knew him not
 " to be the Lord of Glory. But I know him,
 " and am dedicated to his service. My sin for
 " the future will be of a deeper dye. Grant
 " Lord that I may not be guilty of the blood
 " of Christ, that I may not put him to death
 " that came to save my life, that his innocent
 " blood

"blood may not cry to Heaven against me and
 "be laid to my charge. What a wretched crea-
 "ture shall I be if my Saviour shall be my ac-
 "cuser. Thus may we meditate when we re-
 "ceive the Cup.

And indeed it will be a very seasonable me-
 ditation; we shall be very wicked indeed if
 we do now return to our sins and evil wonts,
 when we have not only eat the flesh but drank
 the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ was
 shed for our remission and our pardon, but
 how sad will it be with us if it be laid to our
 charge; if that blood from whence we expect
 our pardon shall cry for vengeance against us!

There is a saying among the *Jews*,
 which is used proverbially, *Wo be*
to that man whose advocate becomes
his accuser. And 'tis very applica-
 ble to the matter in hand. Our

Vi. Buxtorf.
 Lexicon
 Talmud. in
 voce 120

Lord is our Advocate, (1 *Job.* 2. 1.) but if we
 refuse to obey his precepts he becomes our
 accuser and our judg. The blood of Jesus
 pleads for us if we continue obedient to his
 precepts, but if we trample on his blood it
 will speak no better things than the blood of
Abel; and certain it is that *Abels* blood called
 to Heaven against him that shed it. And how
 miserable is that man who instead of receiving
 pardon from Christs blood, receives a greater
 guilt from it, and falls under that curse which
 the *Jews* called on themselves, when they
 said, *His blood be upon us and our children.*

6. This will be a very fit season to intercede with God for others ; we shall do well to pray at this time for the whole Church of God , and particularly for that part of it which is planted among us, especially for all Christian Kings and Governours who do greatly need our prayers, and may very justly expect them also. And here we shall do well while we are attending upon this service, to pray for our friends and relatives, and for those who have desired our prayers. This is a Feast of Love, and a greater expression of our love to our brother we cannot give than to intercede earnestly for his Soul ; and as we are always obliged to do it, so are we more particularly bound to do it at this time when we commemorate the great love of our dying Saviour, which he expressed to the Souls of men. And we shall do well at this time to send up Ejaculations to God for them : Nor must we forget to pray for those who are our enemies without a cause. This our Saviour did when he was upon the Cross, and when we remember his Agonies we must not forget to do as he did. Let us heartily pray for them that God would forgive their sins, and that he would turn their hearts. We are obliged to this both by the precept and by the example of our dearest Lord : Nor may we expect pardon for our offences if we do not from our hearts forgive our brother his. Our hearts must be perfectly

How we must behave our selves, &c. 147
fectly cleared of all the leaven of malice before we can, as we ought, keep this feast.

CHAP. XII.

I Come now to shew how we must behave our selves after we have been partakers of this Table of our Lord. And that I shall do in the following Severals,

1. Let us out of gratitude for so great a favour from Gods hands, shew mercy to the poor. This the *Jews* did upon a festival, and they give particular rules about it. It well becomes us when God hath vouchsafed to entertain us at his Table, to entertain the poor at ours. We can make no amends to God for his mercy to us, but yet we may shew our gratitude by shewing mercy to our poor brethren who bear his image. God hath substituted them to receive our grateful acknowledgments. This we shall cheerfully do if we have upon our minds a lively sense of the mercies of God to us, and of our unworthiness of the least of them. We read to this purpose what the first Christians did. That *they brake their bread, i.e.* received the Lords Supper from house to house, and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, or liberality, praising God, and having favour with all

*ἱχortes
χαρει πρὸς ἅλον τὸν λαόν.* Vid, Dr. Hammond in loc.

the people, or (as it hath been thought those words do import) exercising mercy and shewing kindness to those that wanted. We shall do well to imitate this example; and when God shews us so much mercy let us not be without compassion to one another. For verily if our hearts be hardened against our poor brother, we have great reason to think our selves void of the love of God.

2. Let us use an after-examination. Let us presently reflect and consider what was amiss in us when we were waiting upon our Lord, and humble our selves for it forthwith. Otherwise it is to be feared we shall soon relapse to our wonts, and be so far from being better that we shall be much worse. If we do not rebuke our selves quickly we shall soon return to our vain conversation again.

3. Let us by all means sequester our selves from our worldly divertisements and concerns and employ our time in prayer and praises. It is very advisable that we should be alone, that we should for some time separate our selves from our worldly employments and spend our time in our private devotions. Our Saviour after he had kept this Supper with his Disciples, and sung an Hymn or Psalm of Praise after it, with-draws from his Disciples, and betakes himself to prayer unto God. And this he does three several times. The world will be very ready to thrust in upon us, and to make us forget our vows and good resolutions;

tions; we shall be in great danger if we be not very cautelous. And therefore we must pertinaciously resolve to watch over our hearts; and when our Souls are clean we must be greatly careful that we be not defiled again. We must do here as Physicians advise us to do when we use their prescriptions, we must also take care that we use them *cum regimine*, we must not take cold, nor commit any other error which will make their rules become ineffectual. When our house is swept and garnished we must take care that an unclean spirit do not re-enter, lest our latter end be worse than our beginning.

4. Let us be very careful that we do not relapse and fall back into an evil course of life. Certain it is that it stands us in hand to use our utmost care to this purpose. We must do as the Spouse did, when she had found him whom her Soul loved, she *beld him and would not let him go*, Cant.3.4. We must not only receive our Lord Jesus but we must also walk in him. We must for the time to come devote our selves to the service of our Lord. We must set our selves upon the obedience of all his precepts, and upon the mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections. We must inure our selves to the works of Religion, and the labours of a pious life: We must use our selves to bear the Cross, to forgive injuries, to bridle our anger, to cross our carnal desires and appetites, and contradict the cravings of the

Animal life. If we presently return to our sins again, we shew that we have but played the part of hypocrites and dissemblers, and shall pay dear for our hypocrisie. Our condition will be very sad if we now return to our vomit. Let us therefore renew our purposes of a new life, and be greatly careful that we return no more to folly. We may reason thus with our selves when we are retired into our Closets: "I have now once more renewed my Covenant with God: I have promised him solemnly that I will be his servant: I have, to bind my self the faster, taken the body and blood of my Lord. I am now fast bound to be constant and faithful to him. Sure I am that God with whom I have had to do, is a God that will not be mocked. I may deceive others, him I cannot deceive. What a wretched creature shall I be if I should now prove false! What cords will hold me if I break this! How can I think that God will ever trust me, or how can I ever trust my self if I now relapse! The blood of Christ will call for vengeance against me if I now run on in my former courses. My sins were great before, but now they will be aggravated. What is me if I now run on in my excess of folly. Shall I suffer any corrupt speech to proceed out of that mouth which hath received my Lord? shall I abuse my body to Intemperance which my Lord hath entered into? How shall I ever look my Lord in

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" the face if I should now betray him or deny
" him! Good God, look upon thy servant, and
" whatever plagues I meet with in this world
" suffer me not to forsake thee : Have pity
" upon me O God, and let me not start aside
" from thy precepts. Let me die rather than
" I should deny thee. Suffer me not so far to
" dishonour thy name, and wrong my own
" Soul: Let thy grace be sufficient for me; do
" thou give me power that I may keep thy
" statutes at all times.

Thus may we reason with our selves when we come to our Closets, after we have received the Body and Blood of our Lord. And we shall find it very needful to awaken our selves to a new obedience, as we would avoid the greatest indignation of Heaven. For certain it is if we wilfully return to our follies again, we shall bring great wrath upon our selves. And though perhaps we may not be punished with sickness and sudden death, as the *Corinthians*, were for the abuse of this Sacrament, (1 *Cor.* 11. 30.) yet are there more dismal plagues than these, which will overtake us; such are hardness of heart, blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, and a seared Conscience: These are indeed *deaf strokes*, and such as make not a noise, and strike not our senses; but yet, if we consider the effect and consequence of them, they are more formidable and dismal than the raging pestilence, or the loudest claps of thunder. Let us then

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resolve, as we love our Souls or fear the wrath of God, to sin no more lest the worst of things come upon us. But let us thus judg that *Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again*, 2 Cor. 5. 15. The Body and Blood of Christ will not save us whiles we continue in our sins. Nor may we think that this Sacrament will secure us if we return to our follies. I shall end this particular with the words of *Syracides, He that washeth himself after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again what availeth his washing? So is it with a man that fasteth for his sins, and goeth again and doth the same; who will hear his prayer, or what doth his humbling profit him?* Eccles. 34. 25, 26.

CHAP. XIII.

HAVING shewed you how you must fit your selves for this Sacrament, I shall now also let you know the necessity that lies upon us, after this Preparation to partake of it: And that I shall do in the following Severals.

1. This duty stands upon the same authority which the other precepts of Christianity do. He that commands us to pray, to search the Scriptures, to hear Gods Word, and to take heed how we hear, hath as plainly commanded

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manded us to do this. We are no more left at liberty here than we are in the other precepts of Christianity. And certainly it is an argument of great insincerity, to pick and chuse which of Christs commands we will obey. Besides, by breaking one command we make our selves guilty of all, because we do despise the authority on which the rest stand. For *whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point is guilty of all: For he that said, do not commit adultery; said also do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill thou art become a transgressor of the Law,* Jam. 2. 10. 11. I am sure the command is very plain and evident, *Do this,* Luk. 22. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. and v. 28. *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup.* To examine our selves is a confessed duty, and therefore by a just consequence so it is to eat of this Bread and drink of this Cup. That duty is relative to this: If we do that we are bound to do this also. And though we should neglect that, yet will not that excuse our neglect of this, any more than one fault is a just excuse for the committing of another. I doubt not but that we do divers things, and think our selves obliged to do them also from the Laws of Christ, for which we have no such clear command from the Laws of Christ as we have for this. And therefore certainly if we do not this it is not for want of *plain Scripture* that requires it, but for some other cause

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cause best known to God and our own Consciences. But in the mean we may be ashamed to call Christ, *Lord, Lord*; and he may justly upbraid us for it, when we refuse to *do whatsoever he commands us*, Luk. 6. 46. Let us not for shame call our selves Christians when we will not obey the Laws of Christ. *Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you*, Joh. 15. 14. It is not a partial obedience to the Laws of Christ, will be sufficient to make us the genuine Disciples of our Lord and Saviour. If we would be thought to belong to him we must obey him in all his commands. Unless we do so we cannot be secure. For though we do some of those duties which Christ hath commanded, yet, if we do neglect him in others, we are not such Christians as we ought to be. There are those indeed who think themselves obliged by the Moral precepts of the Gospel, and are in great measure careful that they transgress not those Laws, which are indeed the *laws of nature*, as well as the *Laws of Christ*; but yet these men neglect this *institution* of Christ, and are not much concerned in the mean time; and that because they do not transgress the *law of nature*, though they do transgress the *positive law of Christ*. But these men ought to consider that the *law of nature* is not the adæquate and full rule of their Conscience: They must also attend to the *divine revelation*, and to the institutions of Christ. This precept of partaking of the

Communion is peculiarly the Law of Christ. And to do this is the mark and badg of Christians. By doing it we shew whose followers we are. And we are particularly obliged to do it as we do profess our selves Christians. And the same Authority that obliges us to the observance of any other Law of Christ, does oblige us to do this also. And therefore if we think our selves bound to any Christian duties, we judg very much amiss if we think our selves unconcerned in this.

2. This duty is built upon as great a reason, if we consider the end of its institution, as any other of the same nature is. I say as great a reason, I shall not need to say a greater. It was appointed in remembrance of the death of Christ, that miracle of mercy and love. *As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lords death till he come,* 1 Cor. 11. 26. It is to keep in mind our Lords death for which this Sacrament was appointed; this methinks we should be ready to do who expect such benefits from his death, and know that he died that we might live. We easily fulfill the desires of a dying friend: But if our friend died in our quarrel and defence we know not how to forget him; and he that does forget such a friend is reputed justly a most ungrateful wretch: How then can we forget the dear love of our dying Lord? we keep in memory our Temporal victories and deliverances, and we think we do well in it also;

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also: How much greater reason have we to keep in mind this deliverance from eternal death and slavery? This is never to be forgotten certainly, but ought to be kept in memory as long as this world endures. But then our dying Saviour, who might have required of us some more burdensome service if he had pleased, hath commanded us to do this, and to do it in remembrance of him: He would have us remember his love to us, and he lets us know how he would have us remember his love, *Do this in remembrance of me.*

3. 'Tis a duty the practice whereof is as advantageous to our Souls, if we consider our own necessities, as any whatsoever. We have need of such helps and viands in our pilgrimage towards Heaven. This repast will give us new strength and vigor. And we greatly need that our strength should be renewed. This is a blessed opportunity of renewing our Covenant with God, and reconciling our selves to one another, and dressing up our disordered Souls for another world. This puts us upon exciting all our graces, and strengthening all our good purposes and intentions: This *awakens* our repentance, *inflames* our charity, *augments* our hope, *confirms* our faith, and puts us into a condition that makes us more fit to live and more prepared to die. We are like Clocks and Watches that frequently stand in need of winding up and setting right: Or else like trees that are apt

to be pulled back by suckers, and burdened with luxuriant branches: This blessed Sacrament puts us upon amending all our amisses, it puts us upon cutting off and paring away our excrescencies and superfluities. How glad should we be then of such an excellent opportunity, that does oblige us upon pain of death to become new creatures; and we are offered strength and grace to be so. Who need persuade the hungry man to eat or the thirsty to drink! If we understand our needs they will put us forward. When our Souls grow disordered we should be glad of an opportunity of setting them right: When our sins grow upon us, and our Charity grows cold we should be glad of an occasion to renew our Repentance and enflame our Charity. Here's a blessed occasion that puts us upon all this: This calls upon us to break off our wont of sin, to kindle our dying charity, to forget our quarrels and contentions, and to put our selves in a posture for a better life than this. Here is a great grace offered, and conferred to them that come prepared.

So that we see what great necessity lies upon us to do this. We have a plain and pre-emptory command to do it; a great reason also to enforce the precept; and after all this, our own interest and advantage does loudly require it of us. So plain a precept we may not neglect without open *rebellion* against our Lord. Nor can we resist the reason of it without

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out being guilty of great *ingratitude* : And after this, if we are not perswaded to it by our own interest we are *false to our own souls*. Methinks any of these are strong enough : And it will be very strange if all of them together should not draw us. If the command of Christ, and the sense of his dear love, and our own interest besides will not draw us, certainly our hearts are very hard.

4. To what hath been said I add this that the *Jew* was most strictly obliged to keep the Passover, and he that did neglect it was liable to the severest penalty. And we have therefore great reason to think, the neglecter of this precept of our Lords makes himself obnoxious to the wrath of God by reason of this neglect. For the Passover, we know that every *Israelite* was obliged to keep it, *Exod.* 12. 47. And because it might happen that some of them might be by reason of their *legal defilement* unfit ; or else by reason of *some journey from home*, *unable* to keep it in that place where it was commanded to be kept ; therefore it was provided in the Law that the second moneth should be observed, and in it the second Passover kept, for the sake of such men as these that were unavoidably hindred from keeping it in the first moneth. But this Passover was only substituted in the case above-named. For every *Israelite* was obliged to keep the first Passover if he were clean and not in a journey, and made himself greatly

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greatly obnoxious if he did not. Thus we read, *the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the Passover; even the same Soul shall be cut off from his people, because he brought not the offering of the Lord in his appointed season: That man shall bear his sin*, Numb. 9. 13. And in case he were in a journey or unclean yet did not this excuse him; he was however obliged to keep the Passover unto the Lord, v. 10. And that he might do so the second Passover was instituted, Numb. 9. The *Israelites* were severely obliged to keep the Passover, and to keep it aright. He that did not keep that Feast was to be *cut off* from Gods people, and he that eat leavened bread during that Feast was likewise liable to the same penalty, *Exod.* 12. 15. So that it was commanded to be kept, and to be kept as was appointed upon pain of the greatest curse. The *Israelite* was tyed up very strait; he must keep this Feast, and he must keep it without leaven, and according to all its ordinances and constitutions. There was danger if he did not keep it *as he should*, and danger if he did not keep it *at all*: If he either kept it not, or kept it amiss, he rendered himself liable to the curse of the Law; and that none of the smaller neither; but he was liable to be *cut off* from among his people for it. And though I shall not now examine the different opinions about what is meant by that exprellion of being *cut off from their people*;

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ple ; yet I shall tell you that it does import a very great severity : And therefore we find it annexed to such sins as the Law of *Moses* allowed no expiation for. There was no Sacrifice admitted to make atonement for that offence to which this *excision* did belong. The sin of ignorance might be expiated by a Sacrifice, but there was no atoning such a sin as hath this penalty annexed to it. The Soul that sinned *presumptuously* was to be cut off from among his people : Numb. 15. 28, 30. Such a man was reserved to the punishment of God, though he were exempt from the sword of the Magistrate. It is said of him that would not obey the Meilah that God *will require it of him*, Deut. 18, 17. But when St. Peter cites this passage he expresseth it in other words ; viz. that such a man shall *be destroyed from among the people*, Act. 3. 23. Or cut off from the people ; for he uses the same *Greek* word by which this *cutting off* is expressed by the *Septuagint*, Numb. 15. 30. By which it appears to be a very hainous offence which is thus denounced against, and an offence of that nature that God reserves the punishment of it to himself, and which he allowed no expiation for under the Law of *Moses*. Thus it was with the Passover. Every *Jew* was bound to keep it, or else must be liable for his neglect to the greatest curse. And this curse was unavoidable too, for God took upon himself the execution of it, who would not let him escape that

that might otherwise have avoided the severity of the Magistrate.

Can we then imagine that we shall escape if we neglect to eat of this bread and drink of this Cup? Let us not deceive our selves; we shall not escape: God will require it of us. Certainly, the Passover was in remembrance of their Deliverance from *Egypt*, but our Sacrament is in remembrance of a greater deliverance by the death of Jesus, who was our Passover that was sacrificed for us. If they did not escape, how shall we escape? We may indeed escape the Magistrates sword, but not Gods anger. We may avoid the censures of our Superiors, but we shall not avoid the wrath of the Almighty. We are greatly mistaken if we think we may safely omit this duty, or that we take a secure course to avoid the danger of unworthy Communicating, when we chuse not to communicate at all: We do in so doing but run out of one danger into another. The *Jew* that kept the Passover and eat leavened bread, was under the curse of the Law; and so was he that did not keep the Feast at all: There is a great danger on either side; we run upon our ruin on which hand soever we err.

Indeed the Apostle tells us the danger of our unworthy partaking of this Sacrament: He tells us that the unworthy Communicant eats and drinks damnation to himself and that for this cause many are weak and sickly, and

many sleep, 1 Cor. 11. 29, 30. This makes us afraid, and well indeed it may awaken us. But then we should consider also the danger of not partaking at all. This is that we are not much aware of: And perhaps one reason is, because we do not find the Apostle tells us of the danger of not partaking at all, even when he does tell us the danger of not receiving as we ought. But it is very easie to tell the reason why the Apostle does not speak of that: And the reason is this, because the first Christians did not only eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, but they did it frequently also. The *Corinthians* did Communicate but they did it not as they ought: This the Apostle had a fair occasion to reprove them for, and he does it, and also shews them the danger of what they did. They did not as we do, wholly neglect to partake of the Sacrament, but they were too negligent in their Preparation for it, too careless and remiss in so holy and solemn a service. The first Christians communicated frequently, they did not so easily forget the precept and the dear Love of their dying Lord, as we do. But then so it was that what was so frequently done was not done so devoutly as it should have been; and the Lords-Table was esteemed too common, and they did not eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup with that difference and discrimination which well became so great a service. This is a thing too incident to our frail nature
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that we are too indeyout in those services and offices of Religion which do frequently entertain us. This was the fault of these *Corinthians*, they were not guilty of a neglect of the duty it self, but did not perform it as became them, and the excellent service which they did perform.

CHAP. XIV.

BY what hath been said it appears to be our duty and our interest also to partake of this Sacrament of the Lords Supper ; what it is that keeps us back it is not easie to say. Certain it is that the Law is not repealed, nor yet does the reason of it cease. There is the same precept, and as great a reason to enforce it, and our needs are as great, and the danger of its neglect as great also as ever. And we are very weak if we do imagine that, when he that does partake of this Sacrament amiss makes himself obnoxious to Gods wrath, he shall escape that does not partake at all : But yet because we are very apt to make excuses when we are invited to this feast, and please our selves too that we do it justly, I shall severally consider those common and popular pretences which we make use of in this case. And,

Object. 1. First, some men say, when they are invited, that they are not worthy. And

this is thought a just excuse because the Apostle tells us, *that he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself*, 1 Cor. 11. 29.

Ans^r. In answer to this it is necessary we should know what is meant by *not being worthy*, which is pretended here as an excuse why we do not partake of this Sacrament. If by it we mean that we do not *deserve* to be entertained at Gods Table, what we say indeed is a great *truth*, but yet it is not *pertinent*, nor is it such a worthiness which is required of us. But if by not being worthy we mean that we are not *fit* and *rightly* prepared to partake of this holy Table of our Lord, then we may not indeed partake; but then this will not be a just excuse, it will not clear us and absolve us from our duty.

Certain it is that that worthiness which we must come with does not imply our *merit* or *desert*; but it only imports such a *fitness* and *preparation* of Soul as is *required*, and God will *accept*. For though indeed the word ἀξιος, *worthy* does sometimes import *desert* or *merit*; Thus the labourer is *worthy* of his hire; *i.e.* he *deserves* his wages; yet it does not always signify so, nor yet in this case we are speaking of. The word ἀξιος we translate *meet*, 1 Cor. 16. 4. 2 Thes. 1. 3. we are obliged to walk ἀξίως τῷ Θεῷ, *worthy of God*, *i.e.* becoming our profession of him, and the mercies we receive from him, 1 Thes. 2. 12. And

we must walk *worthy* of our *vocation*, Eph. 4. 1. Aye, and ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, *worthy* of the Gospel, or *as it becometh the Gospel*, as we well translate it, Phil. 1. 27. And he does receive this Sacrament *worthily*, who does it as is required, and with a clean and pure heart.

For otherwise this command of partaking of this Sacrament were unpracticable. If none might receive it but they who deserved this heavenly food we might not approach, who are unworthy of the common mercies which we do enjoy: Now it is a very great error to affirm, that our Lord hath commanded us to do what is impossible to be done. And we have the least reason to affirm it of this service that it is not practicable. For certainly this is one of the easier precepts of the Gospel. And though we should think our Saviour required a very hard task of us when he bids us *deny our selves*, and *take up our Cross*, and *follow him*; yet we cannot think so when he only bids to *do this in remembrance of him*. This is a service of praise and thanksgiving, and such services are not burdensome to those who have not forfeited their gratitude and ingenuity. And did we love our dearest Lord as we should do, or as he loved us, we should not think much of any thing that he should require at our hands; much less should we boggle at so easie and reasonable a service as this is. It was great folly in *Naaman* that he refused to wash and be clean according to the

advice which the man of God gave him. And his servants spake wisely to him when they said, *My father, if the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then when he saith to thee, wash and be clean?* 2 King. 5. 13. If there be any thing hard and difficult which our Saviour hath commanded (for he tells us, *that his yoke is easie and his burden light,*) yet sure I am this is not. So far is it from being impossible that it is indeed not difficult to him that is a sincere and diligent Disciple of our Lord and Saviour.

What hath been said makes it evident that that worthiness which is required in the Communicant does not imply *merit* or *desert*, but only such a *fitness*, and *sincere* and *holy disposition* of Soul as God does require and will accept. And we may be worthy partakers of this Table when we are very sensible of our own demerits. And indeed to think meanly of our selves does very much dispose us to receive the benefits of this Sacrament. And therefore when we say we are not worthy, and make this excuse our meaning must be, that we are not fit and prepared for this holy Table. Now if this be all we have to say that we are not *fit*, and *prepared*, and therefore we do not approach to this Table, we shall find that this is no just excuse.

For if it were, we might with the same ease excuse our selves from the practice of the other

other Laws of Christ. Whereas we are commanded to give to the poor we might by the same reason excuse our obedience, and say, that we cannot do that, because we are not charitable; and besides that, we cannot give alms as we ought, because we are proud, and love to be seen of men and to receive their praise, and therefore rather than do it amiss we will not do it all. Thus may we excuse our selves from works of mercy, from acts of piety, and the services of Religion. We may by this method excuse our selves from serving God, and doing good to our neighbour. We are not willing our servants should do by us as we do by God. We expect they should do as we bid them, nor shall it serve their turns to say that they are not *disposed* to do what we command. We justly look that they be ready to obey us, and that they do not indulge themselves in their sloth, and contumacy. We may be ashamed to serve God at that rate which we should not accept from our servants. The *Jew* might easily have avoided the Passover if this slender excuse would have served his turn. But God commands him to keep it, and he must take care to do it as he ought. If he fail in either of them he is liable to be cut off from among his people. There was no such excuse to be admitted.

Again, when you say you are not fit, let me ask you whether or no you have done all you possibly can to fit your selves. I wish you

would put this question home to your Consciences, and deal sincerely in it. Have you laboured greatly to fit your selves? have you to that purpose set aside some time in order to the examining of your Consciences? Have you earnestly prayed to God for his aid and assistance? Have you done it frequently? Have you advised with your spiritual guides about this weighty matter? Have you used as great a care as men are wont to use in clearing their title to their estates and worldly possessions? Do you do as much for your Souls as you do for your Bodies and Estates? You are not fit to receive the Sacrament you say; but have you laboured greatly that you might be fit? Have you done all you can possibly do? And after all this, is it the grief of your heart that you are not fit? and do you continue to labour that ye may? Consider whether it be thus or no with you. Do not dare to mock God, nor think that you shall be able to deceive him. Have a care how you dissemble with the God of Heaven and Earth. If you are not fit nor yet striving to become so, you are indeed in a very miserable condition. He that commands you to partake of this Table, commands you to be fit to do it also. We are not only required to eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup, but in order to that, to examine our selves. If we neglect to fit our selves, that will not excuse us from neglecting the receiving of this Sacrament, unless we think

think one fault will excuse another.

Again, we shall do well to consider what it is that renders us unfit. Have we not some secret sin which we are not willing to part with? We know the danger to be great if we bring with us a love to our sins; then indeed we eat and drink our own death. Let us then cast our eyes inward and see what that sin is which we are so fond of. I doubt not but men may many times easily find where the true reason lies which renders them unfit. Perhaps we are not willing to forgive our enemy, or else we are not ready to make restitution to our neighbour whom we have injured; or we live a profane and ungodly life, and are not reconciled to the ways of piety and holiness. It may be that we are not willing to part with our sensual and worldly lusts, and we are afraid of being too severely and strictly bound up to a life of Religion and Mortification: This is much to be suspected; for certainly if we loved our Religion and hated our sins, we should be very glad of any opportunity that would engage us more strictly to do well, and to depart from evil. Sure I am that to him that is truly good, and labours sincerely to be better, the tydings of this Sacrament is welcome news: He does gladly embrace this blessed opportunity of becoming good. For the truth of what I say I dare appeal to the Consciences of devout and religious persons. And therefore it is much to be

be feared that the cause which makes us unfit is this, because we love our sins more than we love our God. And if it be thus I would wish such people to consider,

How unfit they are to die. For in this case that which makes them unfit to receive this Sacrament renders them unfit to die also. Now his condition is very dismally dangerous who dares to live in that state of things in which he would be afraid to die. We may indeed refuse to Communicate when we have an opportunity offered us, but we shall not be able to put by the stroke of death. When God calls us out of this world (and how soon we may be called we cannot tell) we must go not only whether we be *willing* but also whether we be *fit* to go or not, we shall not find that any of our excuses will be then taken. And methinks we should be perswaded to fit our selves for death, it being so much our interest to be prepared for it. And though we cannot be perswaded to *receive the Sacrament*, yet sure we cannot but judge it our duty, and our interest also, to make our selves *fit* for it. He that is fit to die is fit to receive also, and who would not labour hard to be fit to die, that knows his time here cannot be long, but may be exceeding short: Be not then so cruel to your own souls as to be unprepared for death; this makes you liable to not only a great sorrow but an everlasting sorrow also.

Before I leave this matter, I would know
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of him, that makes this excuse *that he is not fit*, whether he speak as he think. Do you really judg your selves unfit? For it is possible that a man may make this excuse, and yet have a great opinion of himself, and judg better of himself than other men, who do receive this Sacrament, and do it as they should. And therefore let me put it to thy Conscience, dost thou really judg thy self to be unfit? If thou dost, then tell me what effect this hath upon thee? Art thou greatly humbled under this condition? dost thou strive whatever thou canst to prepare thy self? Is it that which you greatly labour for? Are you willing to take as much pains in the case as you do for your bodies or estates? If you do not strive to become better, when do you think you shall be fit? Put these things home to your Consciences: And I doubt not but that if you be sincere and do not dissemble with God, you may be fitted and prepared for this service.

Obje^ct. 2. Secondly, there are others excuse themselves from this service upon a prudential account, as they esteem it. And thus it is; they understand by the Apostle, that they eat and drink damnation to themselves if they do it *unworthily*, and therefore they conclude it the safer course not to receive it at all. By this means they think they avoid the danger of unworthy receiving, and take the most secure course in not receiving at all. This I
fear

fear is the ground that too many rest upon who do forbear to eat of this Bread and drink of this Cup.

In answer to this pretence I shall not need to say much, especially if what hath been said before be duly considered : But yet something I shall say to it : And,

Ans^r. First, I must tell you that though this may be thought a safe and prudential course, yet it is far from being so. For what prudence is it to run from one extremum to another, and to neglect the mean which we ought to aim at ? we shall not need to forbear, nor yet to receive unworthily : why do we not prepare our selves and receive as we ought ! shall we call it a prudential course to run away from the Laws of Christ ? Or shall he be thought a wise man that runs from one danger into another that is as great ? *This is as if a man should flee from a Lion, and a Bear should meet him, or a Serpent bite him, that I may use the words of the Prophet, Amos 5. 19.* 'Tis like the prudence of the sinner in other things : He is apt to run into extreams : Thus he does frequently do. When he should possess himself of a well-grounded *hope*, he either *presumes*, or else *despairs*, when he should be *patient*, he is *stupid* and *sensless*, or else he is *querulous* and *murmuring* : when he should do good with his riches, and *relieve* the *poor*, he either *profusely spends* them upon his lusts, or else is *penurious* and *covetous*. And when he should

should bear the word of God and keep it; he either will not bear it, or will not keep it. And as he shews great folly in all these things so he does in the case before us; For whereas he is required to receive this Sacrament *worthily*, he instead of that, either *receives it amiss*, or else will *not receive at all*. Which is so far from being prudently done that it is indeed an argument of great folly; and he that takes such a course is far from being *safe*: He that does thus, runs indeed from a great mischief, but he runs into another. There is a rock on each hand that he may split upon; he dies if he eat unworthily, and so he does if he carelessly neglect to eat at all. *He that eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks damnation to himself*. There's death there; but then we are told by truth it self, *Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood ye have no life in you*, Joh. 6. 53. There's a death that meets us also. We may meet with death from a *surfeit*, and so we may from a *famine*, and too long an *abstinence*. He were a very ridiculous man who because he is forbidden meat by his Physician in a Paroxysm of his Feaver, or under the operation of a Purgative Medicine should thereupon resolve to eat no more. By this means he will not only starve his disease, but starve himself also.

Besides, at this rate we might avoid the other precepts of Religion as well as this. The *Jew* might have eluded Gods commands that obliged him to obedience under this pretext that

that he feared he should not do what God required aright. There is danger in hearing Gods Word carelessly, shall we therefore chuse not to hear it at all? We may displease God in our prayers, if we pray not as we should, shall we therefore not pray at all? We may give alms amiss, shall we therefore shut our bowels upon the poor? we may keep a fast for evil ends, shall we therefore keep none at all? There are some that come to Church and do it from an ill principle, and do thereby increase their condemnation, shall we therefore stay at home? Some preach Christ out of ill will, shall I not therefore preach any more? Sure, whatever we may judg, here is little prudence shewn.

For all this while it ought to be considered, that we do not contract our guilt by receiving but by receiving unworthily. And therefore if we shewed our selves wise we should do it by making our selves fit for this service, and not by forbearing it altogether. If we took this course we should avoid all the danger, and not only that, but greatly advantage our own Souls: Whereas now we run our selves upon a great curse. If we come, and are unfit, we are accursed; and so we are if we do not come at all: I shall end that which I had to

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say to this pretence with the words of a late writer, who was well known, not long since, in these parts. And his words up-

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on this occasion are these. "If scanty coming
 "be a sin, what a fearful promunire then run
 "they into, that refuse at all to come? *And*
 "*presently afterwards he denounces* terror to all
 "profane *Eſau's* (as he calls them) who being
 "out of love with the Sacrament through
 "loathing of examination of their woful pro-
 "fane lives make it their constant practice to
 "abandon all Sacraments. And when they
 "are cut off by mens censures for this their
 "contempt, they are content so to live, and
 "are no whit troubled; a man knows not
 "whether the disease or remedy do worse
 "with them; I might compare them to *Cain*,
 "save that I should wrong him by so unjust a
 "comparison: *Cain* because he had villainously
 "and sacrilegiously defiled the Ordinances
 "which *Abel* and he joined in, was debarred
 "of them, and for ever cast out of Gods pre-
 "sence: But as cursed as he was he could lay
 "it to heart, and say it was too great for me
 "to bear. But these Atheists and swine are
 "so far from that, that they willingly content
 "themselves to be cast out, and think it a
 "good bar to keep them from that, which
 "they are glad to be rid of. If ye ask why
 "they do thus, they say they have business to
 "do, and cannot skill of this new doctrine
 "of trial, or cannot be reconciled with their
 "enemies: But oh monsters in the shape of
 "men!-----Surely ye shall pay double for
 "your contempt, both of the means and the
 duty

“duty it self.-----Oh ! but if they come not
 “they shall not eat (say they) and drink their
 “own damnation! *Ans^r*. Yet they escape
 “not ; let them tell me whether of these sen-
 “tences be more easie, *viz.* they eat and
 “drink their own condemnation by coming ;
 “Or, take him and bind him, cast him into
 “utter darkness , where there is wailing,
 “weeping and gnashing of teeth for not co-
 “ming? If there be any odds much good do
 “them with it : But their deep Logick can-
 “not help them to any. *Thus be.*

And thus much in answer to this pretence:
 I now proceed.

Obj. 3. Thirdly, there are others who perhaps are afraid of Communicating with profane and wicked men. And this is that which keeps them back. They say they dare not Communicate with the wicked.

It is supposed that they who make this pretence do not make the former. For it might seem very strange that the same man should use both this and the other also ; that he should at one time pretend he dares not Communicate because he is not fit to do it ; and at another time pretend that he dares not do it because he looks upon other men to be unfit to receive with him. For by the first he would seem to insinuate that he hath a very mean opinion of himself, and by this that he thinks very well of himself, how ill soever he judges of his brother. Having premised this I answer,

First,

Ans. First, that we ought to be very careful that we be not too censorious; that we do not too boldly take upon our selves the office of a Judg which belongs not to us. Let us have a care that we be not too rash.

Secondly, suppose it as it is pretended, yet is there no reason we should suffer for another man's fault. Will not you do your duty because another man neglects his? you may not come unless you be fit, and will you not come till your brother be fit too? Shall another mans fault discharge you from your duty? Christ commands thee to do this; thy duty is plain and determined: He did not put in this exception, and how then do you dare to do it? Another mans neglect will not be charged upon thy score. It is a very unreasonable pretence that you must not come till you are satisfied that other men are fit as well as you. Thy own sins must keep thee back, but must another mans do so too? It would be very strange that when you are fit it should be then in the power of another man to render you unfit. The Apostle says, let a man *examine himself, and so let him eat*; but he nowhere puts this in that we must examine others also. You would have an hard task of it indeed, if you might not proceed till you were satisfied in other men as well as in your selves. You are never like to Communicate if this be a sufficient objection. Have a care you do not think Christ hath commanded you

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that

that which is unpracticable. We know not when we may Communicate if we may not do it till others are prepared as well as we. 'Tis very unreasonable to think that we shall be thus easily excused.

Thirdly, We may by no means separate from our brother till he have been admonished and reprov'd, and he be found incorrigible, *Mat. 18. 15.* Our Saviour hath taught us our duty in this case plainly. Hast thou reprov'd thy brother for his offence as Christ does direct? How knowest thou but that thou mayest by that means gain him? Thou mayest not separate from him till he appear to be incorrigible, and then indeed when the Church hath cast him out thou art to withdraw. But then still it belongs not to every private Christian to exclude an offender from the Communion. It is no part of our duty, nor are we by any means fit for it. We should be too forward to use this power amiss, and not go that Christian way which our Saviour does oblige us to, *Mat. 18.* We know that among the *Corinthians* there were evil men that were carnal, *1 Cor. 3. 3.* others that were injurious and that went to Law with one another before infidels, *Chap. 6.* There was fornication and incest among them, *cb. 5. 1.* And those there were that did behave themselves unchristianly at the *Lords Table*, *Chap. 11.* Yet we find not that the censure of Excommunication is sent out against any but the incestuous: From whence
it

it is easie to conclude that to Communicate with such is not unlawful in a Christian Church. To which I may add that when the Apostle reproves them for their unworthy receiving this Sacrament, it is their own proper negligence he reproves, and not their joyning together in the service.

Fourthly, our communicating with an evil man does not make us partakers of his sin. For that which we communicate with him in is the profession of Christianity, and the service of God. And certainly I may joyn in the profession of my Religion with him who is no more than a bare professor. This is not to joyn with him in his sin, but indeed in doing my duty to Almighty God. Sin is not caught as infectious diseases are by standing near one another; we then are infected by an evil man when we imitate his bad example. It is very evident that *Judas* received this Sacrament among the other Disciples, our Saviour did not send him away (and yet he knew his wickedness) lest he should infect the other Disciples. We are required to have no fellowship with the *unfruitful works of darkness*, Eph. 5. 11. The *sin* we must avoid and reprove, but we cannot always avoid the *sinner*. I confess we ought as much as we can to avoid the evil doer; we ought not to chuse his company unless it be out of a design to reclaim him, and bring him back; this will well become us to endeavour. And where we cannot avoid the

sinner we may shun his evil works, and by declaring against his sin, we may take off the suspicion of our approving his evil ways.

What I have said hitherto must not be so understood as if I would encourage those men to Communicate who are not fit to do it. I have not said any thing which can be reasonably judged to import any such thing. He that is not fit will eat and drink damnation to himself. And therefore every man is obliged very severely to examine his own Conscience. But yet certain it is that there may be those who are unfit, whom yet I cannot by any law of God or man exclude from it. And as certain it is that we may very lawfully communicate with those who are yet very unfit to communicate themselves. And when the Apostle (1 Cor. 11.) blames those who did not Communicate as they should do, yet he does not blame either those who ministred to them, or those that did Communicate with them. And therefore those that do receive this Sacrament ought to be very severe in the examination of themselves. They may be such whom we cannot lawfully exclude, nor yet can you lawfully separate from them, and yet not be such as God will accept.

And therefore such men ought not to think themselves fit because the Ministers of Souls cannot exclude them as unfit, and because the best Christians cannot lawfully withdraw from them. For it is very certain that there are ma-

ny things may render us unfit to Communi-
cate, which yet do not make us liable to the
censures of the Church. Though we may not
justly be rejected as Criminals, yet we may
for all that be such in the eyes of God. And
therefore it will well become every one of us
to set about the examining our Consciences
with fear and trembling: Let us not think
our condition good because the Church does
not exclude us from these holy Mysteries. We
may be very evil men, and yet not be liable
to the censure of the purest Church. But it
will become us to judg our selves where our
Superiors do not, and indeed cannot judg us.
We shall do well to erect a tribunal in our
own breast, and to condemn our selves for
those follies and impieties which other men
cannot condemn us for. And there being now
among us at once so great a decay both of
piety and *discipline* also, the best advice that
can be given in the case is that we would take
severe accounts of our selves, and conduct
our repentance by the continual advices and
ministry of a Spiritual guide. "For by this
"alone, or principally (as a very excellent
"person tells us) was the Primitive piety and
"repentances advanced to the excellency
"which we often admire but seldom imitate;
"and the event will be, that, besides we shall
"be guided in the ways of holiness in gene-
"ral, we shall be at peace as to the times and
"manner of receiving the holy Sacrament.----

“ And we shall not so frequently feel the effects of the Divine anger upon our persons as a reproach of our folly, and the punishment of our unworthy receiving the Divine Mysteries. And this (says he) was earnestly advised and pressed upon their people by the holy Fathers, who had as great experience in their conduct, as they had zeal for the good of Souls.

Fourthly, there are others who do grant it to be their duty to receive, but yet notwithstanding refuse to do it; and that because they may not be admitted to do it after such a manner as they would, and as they think they ought to do it. And perhaps these men do particularly except against kneeling when they do receive it, and because this is required by the Law, and they account it a sin to yield obedience to it, therefore they refuse to receive at all. Now I shall particularly consider those Objections which are or may be brought against kneeling : And,

Object. First, it may be objected that kneeling is not agreeable to our Saviours example when he did institute this Blessed Sacrament, and therefore it is unlawful. The Disciples of our Lord did not receive it kneeling; and therefore we may not.

Ans. In answer to this I shall not put the Objector upon proving either what the posture was, or that it was not that of kneeling, in which the Disciples did receive this Sacra-

Sacrament with our Lord, but I will suppose that they did not kneel, but that they used that gesture which was commonly used at their meals; that is, that they did lie along upon beds, which is said to be the gesture used at meals in those times, and in that place; yet I shall shew notwithstanding this that we may not refuse to receive the Sacrament upon our knees. For,

1. It is not to be thought that we are more obliged to follow the example of Christ and his Apostles in their *gesture* (which is but a circumstance of an action) than we are in the other circumstances of *time*, and *place*, and *habit*. Now those that make this Objection do themselves depart from Christs example in the other circumstances of *time*, and *place*, and *habit*, and think it no sin to do it, and are therefore by the same reason at liberty in the other. Our Saviour gave the Sacrament in a *private house*, and in an *upper room*: He gave it also in the *Evening* and *after Supper*; and when he gave it he gave it in a *Coat without a seam*, yet for all this these men that make this objection do not in these things follow the example of Christ, nor yet require other men to do it: I know no reason can be given why we are not as much obliged to one circumstance as another. 'Tis not certainly to be believed that we should be only obliged to the posture, and not also to the time and place. If we must do

Vid. Dr. Sanderson de obligat. Consc. prælect. 3.

it in the same gesture, why do we not also do it at the same time and place? and if we use our liberty in the time and place it is strange we should make so great a stir about the gesture.

2. It is very certain that if our Saviour and his Disciples did lye along upon Beds when this Sacrament was instituted, that who ever does sit or stand when he receives the Sacrament does deviate from Christs example as well as he that kneels. For none of these are the gesture which our Saviour and his Disciples are supposed to have used. And if on behalf of sitting it be pleaded that that being our Table-gesture, ought to succeed to that which our Saviour used. I answer,

(1) That we are not by any law of Christ forbid to receive the Sacrament unless we can receive it in such a gesture as is commonly used by men at their Tables; nor have we any such command that does oblige us to use any certain gesture.

(2) That then it must be granted that if it had been the custom to eat our meals upon our knees it would have been very lawful for us to have kneeled at the receiving the Sacrament. From whence it will follow that it is not evil in it self to do it, and so far from that that it would have been our duty had it but happened to have been the custom of the Country to have eaten our meat upon our knees. And then,

(3) It

(3) It will be very strange that the Laws of our just Superiors should not have as great an influence upon us as the casual customs of the place where we live ; especially when we are so often called upon to obey our Superiors, and required to *obey every ordinance of man for the Lords sake*. We have very plain Scripture that commands us to obey the King, and all in Authority. But we have none at all that forbids us to kneel, or commands us to sit when we receive the Sacrament. And our being determined to our Table-gesture is not from any Law of Christ.

(4) It will also follow from hence that it will be unlawful to *stand* as well as to *kneel*, neither of them being agreeable to the example of our Saviour, nay nor the gestures which are commonly used when we eat at our Tables. Nay,

(5) After this manner of reasoning we should sin if we should receive the Sacrament lying along as the Disciples are supposed to have done, because it is not our Table-posture; and so we should contract a guilt when we did most closely follow the example of our Blessed Saviour.

3. To what hath been said this may be added, that the *Jews* were obliged to keep the Passover and to keep it according as God had appointed; and we know that the Law of *Moses* is very particular and precise in setting down the manner how God would be served.

And

And it does descend to very minute matters, and prescribe how the service must be performed. And thus it was in the Passover; they were determined to the *time*, and *place*, when and where this service must be solemnized, and its particular rites are set down by *Moses*. But yet notwithstanding all this, the gesture in which they were to eat this Passover is not expressed by *Moses*; he is silent in this particular, and though he lets them know that they must keep the Passover yet he does not tell them whether they must eat their Paschal Lamb, sitting or standing, &c. Now in this case the *Jew* was undetermined by any part of *Moses* Law as much as we are in the matter of the Sacrament, what gesture we shall receive it in, by the Laws of Christ. Indeed if the example of those who kept the

Vid. Bochart.
De Animal.
Scriptur. in
Synopf. Crit.

first Passover might determine them they must eat it as they did: And it is thought most probable that they did eat it *standing*. For they were expressly required to eat it with their *loyns girded*, their *shoes on their feet*, & their *staff in their hand*: And to eat it *in haste*, *Exod. 12. 11*. But yet however we find not that the *Jews* observed any such posture afterwards, nor did they think themselves obliged to imitate the example of those who kept the first Passover. And our Saviour himself (who did observe the Law of *Moses*) keeps the Passover indeed with his Disciples, but not standing,

ding, but sitting, or lying along ; which was a posture that was not enjoined the *Israelites* by the Law of *Moses*, nor yet warranted by the example of the first eaters of the Passover, however it were introduced by the general consent of the Nation, or the command of their Superiors. For there being no Law in the case given by *Moses* they did not think themselves obliged to imitate the example of those who in *Egypt* eat the Passover, but did rather chuse to comply with the custom of their Country, or law of their Superiors in this matter, it being not repugnant to any law of God given by *Moses*. And therefore the *Jews* do frequently tell us of sundry things wherein the *פסח מצרים* Passover of *Egypt* differed from the *פסח וורות* Passover of after-times ; and amongst other things they tell us, that whereas they in *Egypt* were obliged to eat that Passover *in hast*, *Exod. 12. 11*. For their loyns were to be girded, their shoos on their feet, and their staff in their hands ; which seems to import that they eat it standing and ready for their marching out of *Egypt* ; yet they tell us that they were not obliged by this example of the *Israelites* to do so in after-times : Nor do we ever find that they did it, or that ever they were reprov'd for not following this example. Nay, besides what hath been

Vid. *Pasach.*
C. 9. M. 5.

Maimon:
Hal. Pis.
C. 10.

Targum
Jonath. in
Aben Ezra
in Exod.
12. 11.

been said, we find that the *Jews* had their *ללה* or Hymn at the Passover, which was never commanded them by any of the Laws of *Moses*, and yet were they not therefore guilty of Will-worship, or adding to the Word of God. Nay our Saviour himself is thought to have complied with them in this custom of theirs when he did keep the Passover, *Mst.* 26. 30.

And therefore certainly we have no reason to doubt but that we may lawfully receive the Sacrament of the Lords Supper upon our knees: It being not against any Law of Christ; and it is the Law of Christ which in this case must determine us: If we be not determined by his Law we are left free, and therefore may very lawfully use this gesture. But then when our just Superior commands us we are bound to obey even by the Laws of Christ which oblige us to be subject to the higher powers. When we kneel at the receiving this Sacrament we do nothing contrary to Christs Law: But if we refuse to receive at all, because we will not kneel, then it is most certain that we break the Laws of Christ, and that very greatly also; both as we refuse to *do this* as he commands us, and as we disobey our just Superiors whom God hath set over us.

Obj. But others perhaps will except against Kneeling, as that which will involve us in Idolatry, it being supposed that when we
 'kneel

kneel at our receiving the Sacrament we do thereby worship the Bread and Wine, or at least by them as by an Image we worship Christ.

Ans. 1. Whether by Kneeling when we receive the Sacrament we may justly be thought to pay religious worship to the creatures of Bread and Wine, will best known by considering the intention of those that do require Kneeling at our hands. Now it is very certain that our Church which requires we should kneel, does openly disallow that Doctrine of the Church of *Rome* which puts them upon adoration of the outward Elements. And therefore whatever the Church of *Rome* is guilty of, yet it is certain that we believe the Bread and Wine to be Creatures, and not in their nature altered, not changed in substance from what they were. And consequently it cannot be imagined that our Church should require Kneeling with an intention that we should worship the Elements of Bread and Wine, when she hath always taught a Doctrine that does contradict any such practice. And this might suffice in answer to this Objection. But yet I add,

2. That this might be put out of all doubt the Church of *England* hath farther declared her meaning in this matter: So that hereafter whoever shall charge her as guilty of Idolatry in requiring Kneeling at the Sacrament, as if thereby she intended we should adore the
Bread

Bread and Wine, will shew himself either *profoundly ignorant*, or *greatly malicious*. What our Church declares to this purpose may be found in the Book of Common-Prayer, at the end of the Rubrick after the Communion-Service, in these words : *Whereas it is ordained in this Office for the Administration of the Lords Supper, that the Communicants should receive the same Kneeling; (which order is well meant for a signification of our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ therein given to all worthy Receivers, and for the avoiding of such profanation, and disorder in the holy Communion, as might otherwise ensue) yet lest the same Kneeling should by any persons, either out of ignorance and infirmity, or out of malice and obstinacy be misconstrued and depraved; It is here declared, that thereby no Adoration is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental Bread and Wine, there bodily received; or unto any Corporal presence of Christs natural flesh and blood. For the Sacramental Bread and Wine remain still in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored, (for that were Idolatry to be abhorred of all faithful Christians) and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here : It being against the truth of Christs natural body to be at one time in more places than one.*

Thus plainly are we taught the Churches sense in the case before us : Nor may we now
 imagine

imagine that by our Kneeling we are obliged to worship the Creature in stead of the Creator.

3. The Sacrament is delivered to us with a prayer, and certainly it is not only lawful to Kneel when we pray, but it is also very agreeable to the example of our Blessed Saviour, *Luk. 22. 41.* And if we are bound to pray always I am sure it well becomes us to do it then. And there cannot possibly be any danger of Idolatry in bowing our Knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we may lawfully pray at all times, and in all places, we may very lawfully Kneel when we do it. And sure no man in his wits can deny but I may lawfully pray to God in the very act of receiving the Sacrament; and if I may do that, it is very evident that I may use that gesture which our Saviour did when he prayed a little before his agony and death.

What hath been said I hope is enough to satisfy those men who desire to find the truth. There are those whom nothing will quiet. Some men will not be convinced though we should bring them beams of light. However I shall not mention any other Objections which men are wont to bring for their excuse: Not that I have named all that might be found, but because I have named the more general and material. Nor do I know any other that are worth the naming. I pray God grant that we may not refuse the truth where-ever we find it.

it. We are in a very miserable condition if we suffer our selves to be swayed by our prejudices rather than guided by the truth : If we shall withstand the clearest evidence, because it stands not with our occasions. It will well become us in the fear of God (who will not be mocked) narrowly to search into our hearts and consciences. If we love the truth we may find it. God will search us ere it be long ; it will then appear whether or no we have done our utmost to be rightly informed. We shall then find it had been much better to have done our Lords will than to have disputed wittily. All our disguises must then be pulled off, and we shall be judged then by the unerring Law of God. The good God awaken us to a serious diligence about our Souls, and lead us at once into the paths of peace and truth. We shall have an heavy account to make, if upon light and insufficient grounds we separate from our brother, and omit so excellent a service as our dying Lord hath required of us. And surely those grounds must be very light which have no more weight than the pretences above-named. I shall end with the words of that pious Father upon this oc-

Augustin.
Tom. 2.
Ep. 118.
ad Jan.

occasion : *Quod neq; &c. That what is enjoined, and is neither against faith or good manners, is not to be refused, but according to the place where we are and do converse, is to be observed.*

CHAP. XV.

FROM what hath been said before, we may see how much we do amiss if we altogether neglect so excellent a service as this, or if we do it not as frequently as we can: For he that does it but seldom, when he hath the opportunities of doing it frequently, is reprovable as well as he that does omit it quite. And indeed we are self-condemned if we do omit and let slip sundry of those opportunities which God hath given us; and only make use of them sparingly. For whereas by doing it at all we do acknowledge it to be our duty to *do this* in remembrance of our Lord, by chusing to do it but seldom, we do avoid the paying our duty to our Lord, and the disposing our selves for so excellent and holy a service. It is to be feared that such men are not much affected with their Lords death, who decline the often remembrance of it. Were our hearts enlarged we should be willing to be always praising our dearest Lord. We are not stinted by the Laws of Christ to do this but so many times in a year; and we know the first Christians did it very frequently; all that we are obliged to in the case is that, *as oft as we do it* we should do it in remembrance of Christ. We
O may

may justly suspect our selves not much taken with the kindness of our Saviour when we do readily neglect so excellent an opportunity of keeping up the memory of it. It is a sign that our hunger is not great when we can easily neglect our food that is prepared for us. We are afraid sure that the interest of Religion should prevail too far upon us, when we will not accept every opportunity of becoming better: Certainly if we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, we shall be willing to draw nigh to him and to do it frequently also. *It is to be feared* (as one says well) *that they who never receive (though they may) save at Easter, never fast but in Lent, that they never repent till they die.* If we love our Lord greatly, and have upon our minds a great sense of his kindness, we shall be glad to pay him our acknowledgments of praise and thanksgiving: But if we do this as seldom as we can it is a sign that we do it rather out of *fear* than *love*, that we do it rather because 'tis the *custom* of the *Country*, than because it was the *command* of our *dearest Lord*. For it is most certain that if we loved our Saviour much we should delight to remember him frequently. It is so I am sure in all things else which we love: We take a pleasure in remembring our dearest Friends and Relatives, we frequently mention those things which have given us a pleasure or profit,

But

But doubtless we might be perswaded to do this frequently, if we were once wrought upon to do it at all, and as we should. For the very same reason that moves the devout Soul to do it once will also move him to do it frequently. And that we who profess Christianity should not do it at all, that we should dare to omit so plain a precept, is to me one of the strangest and most unaccountable things.

Indeed, where men have no mind to do their duty they are apt to cavil and dispute and make excuses. Thus do those men do who had rather *dispute wittily* than *live well*. We please our selves with little arguments, and great prejudices; and are not only content to neglect our duty, but (which is much worse) we go about to justify our neglect. Thus do we slide from one error to another.

But all this while we do but deceive our selves and others; God is not mocked. We shall be judged hereafter by the unerring Law of God. It is not our mistaken Conscience that shall absolve us if Gods Law condemn us. We shall be judged by what is *written*, and not by what we *ween* and *think* in the case. This consideration if it had but its due weight with us, would be of great moment to move us to the most diligent and impartial search after truth. And then

certainly we should not be so easily prevailed upon by weak arguments, and by the carnal and sensual delights of this world to neglect so plain and excellent a duty. Whereas now we have some little Objections against our duty, or else we have our farms, and merchandize or yokes of Oxen that hinder us from doing it. I shall end all with the words of a late pious and learned Writer upon this occasion.

“By this time I hope you see, that it is good for you to draw near to God, at his holy Table; if you have any desire to be good Christians, or any favour of spiritual pleasures. You must wholly cast away all remembrance of your duty, and be lost to all sense of rational satisfaction, or else be strongly inclined (considering what hath been said) to take the pains to prepare your selves, or rather to keep your selves in a constant Preparation, for frequent Communion there with our Blessed Saviour: An innocent, holy and useful life cannot but commend it self to you, if it be but on this score, that you may be entertained with such a comfort as to know the love of God in Christ to you; and be fit to be feasted continually with such delightful pledges of it. How is it possible for any considerate persons to despise or neglect such means of their contentment? The Table
“of

“ of the Lord, methinks, should be more
“ acceptable to them than a Stage; and
“ they should run more greedily to this Di-
“ vine Feast than they do to the Theatres:
“ He should have more guests, and a greater
“ croud to attend upon him than those so
“ much frequented places. For what do they
“ see represented there but some of the fol-
“ lies of Mankind; the passions and mis-
“ fortunes of a miserable lover; the wiles
“ and subtle contrivances of some ingenious
“ person; or such like things, some of which
“ never were? But here is represented the
“ great wisdom of Almighty God; the ma-
“ nifold wisdom of our Creator, into which
“ the Angels desired to look, and of which
“ they are gladsom spectators: The incom-
“ parable kindness of our Blessed Saviour;
“ that ardent love which offered him up to
“ God upon the Cross, and which he still
“ continues now that he is in the Heavens;
“ as we see by these remembrances which he
“ hath left us of it: The rare method of our
“ Salvation: The wonderful way which
“ Heaven hath contrived to bring lost Souls
“ again thither; the glorious conquest which
“ the Saviour of the World hath made over
“ Sin, the Grave and Hell; all which we
“ here behold his Captives, and our selves the
“ prize which he desires to win by all his la-
“ bours. Do not men then extreamly betray
“ their

“ their infidelity ? is it not plain that Christi-
“ an piety lies languishing and dying ; when
“ such numbers will spend a great deal of
“ time to prepare and dress themselves to be
“ seen in the Theater, and we cannot pre-
“ vail in some places with any considerable
“ company to meet us at this glorious repre-
“ sentation, which we make at the Table of the
“ Lord ? They that will be at the pains to go
“ to the former every day, content themselves,
“ nay think it a great trouble, to put their
“ Souls into a posture to come to this holy
“ place once in a whole year. And God knows
“ how many there are, that will not put them-
“ selves to that pains neither : who rarely ap-
“ pear before God at this holy Solemnity, and
“ whose faces are scarce ever seen in the pre-
“ sence of our Saviour. O shameful ingrati-
“ tude ! which you that read these things, if
“ you are believers, can never endure, I think
“ to be guilty of. If you give any credit to
“ this history of the love of God in Christ
“ Jesus, recorded in the Gospel, you will spend
“ some time sure to dispose your selves to
“ make frequent acknowledgments to him, by
“ receiving these holy Mysteries. You will be
“ ashamed that so much time should be con-
“ sumed in trimming up your selves to see and
“ to be seen in other places ; and little or
“ none that you may come before God, and
“ behold the great things that he hath done
“ for

“for your Souls. For the love of God consider at what charge he hath furnished this Table for you; how often he hath invited you to it; how desirous he is that you would shew him so much love, as not to refuse him your company there. Think how ill he must needs take it, if you will not accept of his singular kindness; nay, that you your selves will not be pleased, when you reflect and consider, of how much joy you have deprived your Souls, by denying him so much of your duty. For there is no compare between all the jollities in the world, and this one single pleasure, of giving hearty thanks to God, for his unspeakable mercy to us in Christ Jesus. Do but come and see. Satisfie your selves by waiting on him at his Table, with such thoughts as become his presence. If you have the least spark of goodness; you will find it shine and glow, and spread it self to your infinite joy and contentment of heart. Among all the various degrees and conditions of Christian people, there will none be found that come hither with sincere affection to do this in remembrance of their Saviour, but may go away rejoycing, loaded with many Divine benefits.

F I N I S.